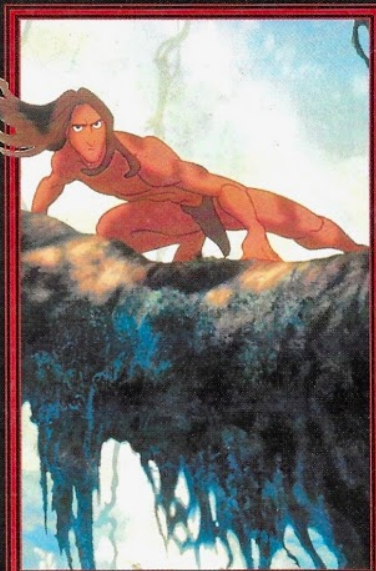


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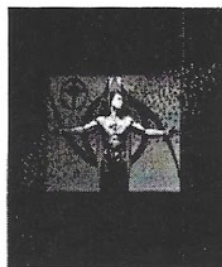
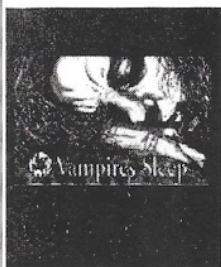
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COVER: THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF (1960), TARZAN © 1999 Edgar Rice Burroughs, inc., and Disney Enterprises, Inc.

Scarlet Letters

Got the new issue of *Scarlet Street* today, and I've been reading it intently during breaks from the layout sessions on our own next issue. This is another great one, the centerpiece being Ken Hanke's excellent article on the Paramount horrors. Not only is the piece well-written, thorough, and critically sound, but it's also groundbreaking in the sense that I don't recall ever seeing Paramount profiled as a producer of horror films before—certainly not in such depth. It defines their "house style," their personality as a horror studio, perfectly. An exciting overview, and it added a few titles to my "must see" list, particularly **TERROR ABOARD**.

I must say I was gobstruck by the censored scene from *PETER PAN*, and while it has every right to be included as a piece of film history, I hope it doesn't result in any trouble for you. In today's climate, I don't know that I would have had the courage to print it.

In closing, let me mention that I also enjoyed the wonderfully gratuitous mention of my name in Michael Draine's review of McFarland's new Italian horror book, which I haven't yet seen or read. The acknowledgment was very much appreciated.

Congratulations on another fine issue.
Tim Lucas
Video Watchdog
Cincinnati, OH

I really liked Richard Valley's *FRANKLY SCARLET* editorial in Issue #32. The *PETER PAN* features were terrific, as were the delightful Zacherley article and Ken Hanke's Paramount treatise. I enjoyed learning more about Mitchell Leisen and *DEATH TAKES A HOLIDAY*, and I really appreciated the coverage of the two Best Pictures of 1998 (*APT PUPIL* and *GODS AND MONSTERS*) and the doubly Best Actor of 1998 (Sir Ian McKellen).

Jeff Thompson
Nashville, TN

If you liked the Mitchell Leisen coverage, then you'll want to read David Chierichetti's fascinating book on the director and his films. You'll find information in the ad on page 72.

Once again, *Scarlet Street* (#32) proves to be the second best thing to keep on one's night table . . . and it doesn't even come in a tube! I especially liked the creative way in which you ran a picture on page 33 of Brad Pitt and a picture on page 44 of Brad's (Renfro, that is) pits.

Two relatively minor quibbles on your latest achievement: David Chierichetti lists 1956's *THE GIRL MOST LIKELY* as Mitchell Leisen's

final feature when most sources cite an odd, mid-sixties Las Vegas documentary called *SPREE* as Leisen's swan song. Also, Ken Hanke credits *ISLAND OF LOST SOULS* as containing Charles Laughton's campiest performance. Perhaps Ken has never seen *THE SIGN OF THE CROSS*, in which Laughton's wildly over-the-top performance as Nero is, to my way of thinking, the first example of a deliberately campy performance in the history of talking pictures. (Ironically Peter Ustinov followed suit in 1951 in *QUO VADIS*, in which his Nero gave Laughton's a run for its money for self-conscious campiness.)

Anyway, keep up the terrific work. (And how about a future article on all the versions, takeoffs and extensions—cinematic, television, and theatrical—of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*?)

Barry Monush
BMonush@mtr.org

Say, as long as you guys keep turning out articles in the vein of *PARAMOUNT HORRORS* you've got a lifetime subscriber here. However, if you're going to include movies like *MURDER BY THE CLOCK* and *TERROR ABOARD* as horror films, then for completeness' sake you should also have included Paramount's 1933 *ROCKY MOUNTAIN MYSTERY*, which by coincidence I saw only a week or two before I received the current issue. Even though it's set out West, it's got everything else to qualify



as a film you and your readers should be interested in: direction by Charles Barton, a dying millionaire, not one but two greedy and dysfunctional families, disappearing corpses, a string of surprisingly grisly and creative murders, a caped killer lurking around a decaying mining operation, the actors George Marion Sr. and Mrs. Leslie Carter (now there's a pair whose facial features make them look like they came straight from H. P. Lovecraft's *Innsmouth*), Ann Sheridan in jodhpurs, Randolph Scott in leather chaps . . .

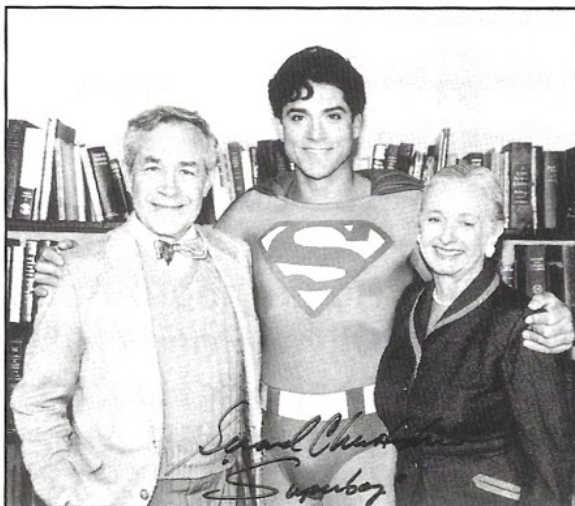
Which makes me wonder, how many more films like this one—borderline horror films, genuine oddities—will remain in obscurity because you guys run away from any movie that carries the slightest whiff of sagebrush? Don't deny it—every now and then your writers drop a snide remark in one of your articles that reveals your disdain for Westerns. Now, of course, I'm not saying that you should trade detectives and vampires for cowboys and Indians in *Scarlet Street* and commit publishing suicide, but maybe someone can do a little digging and come up with some more cross-genre films like this, heretofore neglected because they were "just Westerns." In fact, I would wager that an oddity like *ROCKY MOUNTAIN MYSTERY* would, if anything, disappoint your run-of-the-mill Western junkie and hold the interest of people like me, jaded film buffs who read your magazine to find out more about overlooked and forgotten flicks like this one.

So then, if you tenderfeet ever find someone on your staff getting a little stale for story ideas, have them go West, saddle up Old Paint, and round up some of them stray dogies that are mystery and horror pictures dressed up in Stetsons and six-shooters. Might make a heck of an article, and if your magazine isn't the place for it, I sure don't know which magazine is. Yippie-yi-yay!

Mark Angelcyk
Kewanee, Illinois
Great idea, Mark, especially as *Ye Reditor* is very much a Western fan. We'll keep it in mind.

Although I otherwise enjoyed Alvin H. Marill's informative article,

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Continued on page 8

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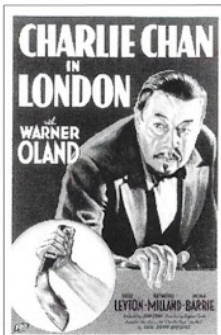
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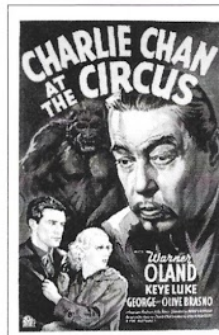
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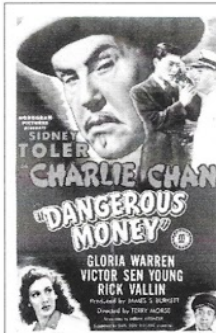
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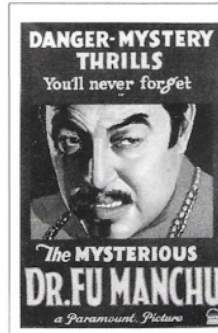
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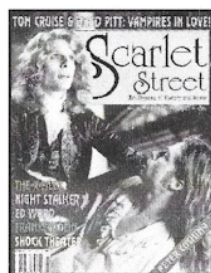
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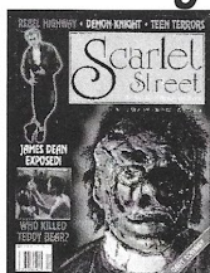
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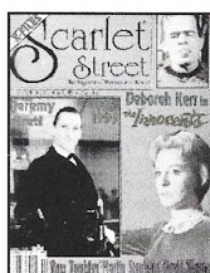
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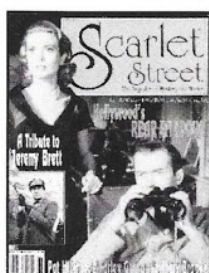
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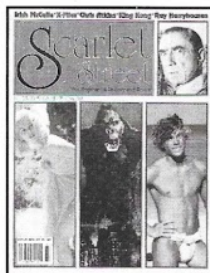
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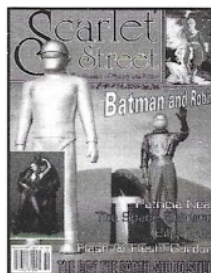
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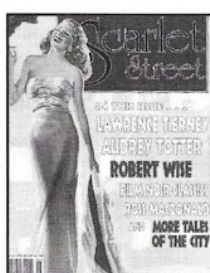
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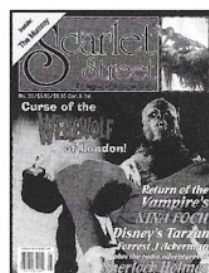
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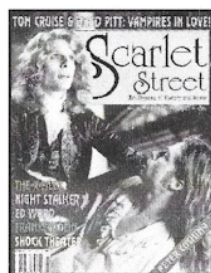
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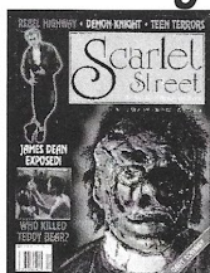
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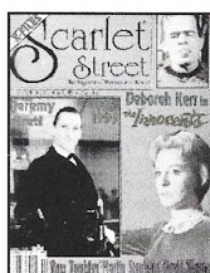
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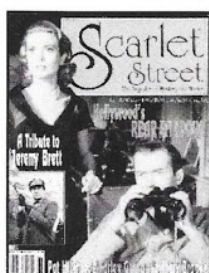
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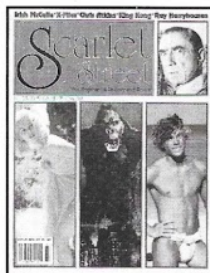
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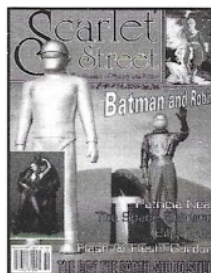
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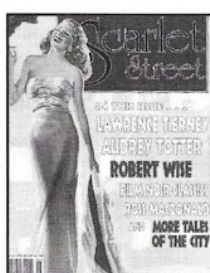
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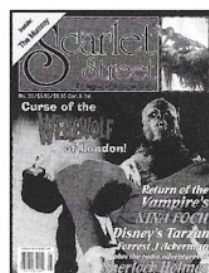
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Frankly Scarlet



Did anyone warn us how much work was involved in making *Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Mystery and Horror* a bimonthly mag instead of a quarterly? Well, yes, actually, they did...

Did they tell us we'd better put a sizeable chunk of our private lives on hold? Yeah, they said that, too...

Nevertheless, bimonthly we went and bimonthly we stay, although it's meant we've had to grab our playtime wherever we can find it, more often than not at those working vacations called horror conventions. That's why it's become more vital to us than ever before that the convention is a first-class affair, with vendors and conventioners alike treated with respect, courtesy, and an honest desire to make everyone happy.

No easy task, because those beleaguered folk putting on a show are usually running in six directions at once, frantically taking care of business. Perhaps that's why some of them forget that the people buying the tickets and the businesses paying for those rickety tables are their business, and without us they'd have a very barren show indeed.

When horror cons experienced a sudden revival in the first years of this decade, concurrent with a rash of brand-new horror magazines (the earliest itch of which was *Scarlet Street*), Kevin Clement and his Chiller Con quickly took the lead as the biggest, busiest, and best. There's good reason for that: Kevin knows how to take care of his customers. In nine years, there hasn't been a single occasion when we've run to Kevin or one of his staff with a problem ("The electricity doesn't work!" "There's no electricity!" "Who discovered electricity?") and not had it semi-immediately fixed. If you request a table in a certain spot, rest assured it'll be there. If you do Kevin a good turn, there's no question that you'll be acknowledged and thanked for it. Kevin knows the number one rule of putting on a good convention: you don't treat the people handing you money as though you're doing them a favor.

Since Chiller's early days, quite a few cons have come (and gone). This year has seen the debut of two superior shows, and will shortly see the return of one of our faves.

Last February we attended the 70's Exploitation/Cult Cinema, TV & Music Con (quickly redubbed The Seventies Show) in Tarrytown, New York. The show was put on by pal Phil Palmieri and its professionalism belied its fledgling status. (We especially enjoyed partying with NIGHT STALKER vets Carol Ann Susi and Jack Grinnage, and LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT star David Hess, pictured in the top photo.) Phil's thinking of doing another show somewhere down the line, and *Scarlet Street* is behind him all the way. (That's Staffers Tom Amorosi and Dan Clayton at the con in the bottom photo, by the way.)

Then there was Fright Vision last March, the brainchild of Carl and Donna Thompson (pictured in the second photo from the bottom with their loyal friends). Fright Vision was held in Akron, Ohio, and attracted an impressively large crowd for a first-time effort. It's the kind of show where the celebrities stop by your bar table and ask if you'd mind if they sat with you awhile. And the Saturday night trip to a local bijou for 3-D showings of CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON and IT CAME FROM OUTER SPACE was a sheer delight. Fright Vision II is already in the works, and we'll definitely be there!

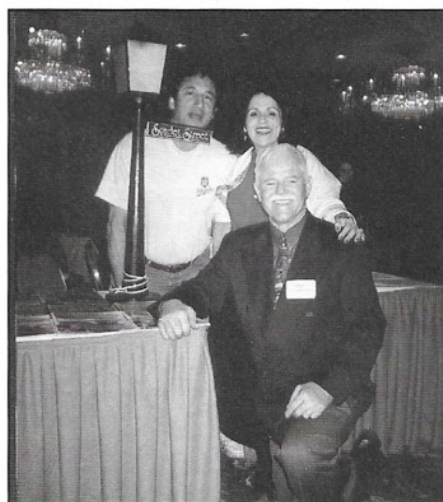
And let's not skip the ever-popular Monster Bash, where you'll find *Scarlet Street* from June 25 through 27, along with Sara Karloff, Dwight D. Frye, Carla Laemmle, and our own Forry Ackerman. I've been asked to introduce the showing of BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN and, except for the butterflies in my breadbasket, I'm looking forward to it. (Ron Adams runs the show, and runs it right. You'll find him center stage in the second photo from the top, surrounded by Craig Johnson, Gary Schroeder, and his dad, Tom Adams.)

I've singled out these shows because of the many kindnesses extended to *Scarlet Street*. One hand helps the other; if it doesn't, then the best you can hope for is a finger.

Our other great source of fun and relaxation, alas, is closing its doors at the end of the month. (This is being written on May 10, 1999.) I'm speaking of the warm, wonderful Eighty Eights, the greatest piano bar/cabaret ever to grace the Big Apple. Tom, myself, and many other *Scarlet* Staffers have basked in the love and friendship of Karen Miller, Rochelle Seldin, and the extraordinary talents they've assembled 'round the piano over the past 11 years. Only a month ago, arranging this issue's interview with *Return of the Wolf Man* author Jeff Rovin, did I learn that he was also an Eighty Eights devotee whose wife had performed there professionally.

We're all hoping for a miracle that'll keep the doors open or at least give Karen and Rochelle another base of operations. But if it doesn't happen, it's been the best of times...

Richard Valley



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SCARLET LETTERS

Continued from page 8

surely one of them. Also Glenn Ford, Kirk Douglas, and directors Joseph H. Lewis and Budd Boetticher.

Congratulations on Rick McKay's great job with Fay Wray, Larry Tierney, and the late David Manners.

Daniel Camargo,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

We Johnny Sheffield as Bomba fans sure would appreciate another *Scarlet Street* article! And could somebody please find out when the Bomba series will be available on video?

Grant Lloyd
jimc@pronet.net

We'll be getting back to Bomba in due time, I'm sure. Meanwhile, there's a photo of Johnny as Boy on page 19 of this issue, and Sheffield fans who missed our interview with the son of Tarzan are hereby directed to *Scarlet Street* #15 on Page 6.

It isn't supposed to be like this! In a perfect world, a subscriber renews his subscription to a favored rag, and he goes on un-interrupted . . .

Unless, that subscriber takes his sweet-ass time about getting that renewal into the proper hands! In my irresponsible and reprehensible behavior, I ended up missing issue #31! You can rectify that problem, can't you? I can't stand the thought of missing a *Street*, noble dudes!

If you do this, I'll let you in on a leetle secret: I wrote you a letter once, that was printed, under the name "James Burke." Remember that letter??? (I can hear you punching the keys on your database right now!) Well, after you re-familiarize yourself with that letter, it might interest you to know that I have just reopened a classic old movie theater here in Decatur (the Avon Theatre 217-422-8151), and, this weekend we are showing GODS AND MONSTERS as a first-run in this town! Furthermore, I have been threatened by local Christian groups for the audacity of screening a "gay movie" (sic), and local Jerry Falwell types threaten to picket my theater! It's getting awfully difficult to be a straight, heterosexual male, and be the target of all these threatened homophobes! Kinda makes me feel like kick-in' some fuckin' ass!

So send me my #31 already!!!

Skip Huston
ASCAP Composer and Publisher
Decatur, IL

Your #31 is on its way, Skip, and congratulations on what sounds like a truly dynamic movie theater! You couldn't have asked for a better film than GODS AND MONSTERS to show, either.

I just received your latest issue and, as usual, it's great. One complaint. As a recent purchaser of a DVD player, I'm a little annoyed by your complete lack of DVD reviews in the review section. I

know there are more titles on laser-disc, but I suspect this is a dying format and that you should take notice of the incredible (and growing) popularity of DVD. I'm sure a lot of your readers have bought players and would enjoy reading reviews of the latest genre titles.

Dwight A. Macpherson
Creative Services
The Ottawa Citizen

This issue features our very first DVD review in *SCREEN AND SCREEN AGAIN*, Dwight, and you'll find lots more popping up in future issues.

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Gosh, fellas, there's only one thing worries me—when I get Lou's brain, will I still be smart enough to read *Scarlet Street*?

Yes, kids, it's the *Scarlet Street* Slightly Mangled Special. We have in our vaults some issues with minor defects: price tags glued on the covers, a folded page, a gypsy curse scrawled on the classifieds . . . nothing too grim, but enough to render them unsuitable for sale at the usual rate.

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Theatrical Thrills

Moviegoers who feel menaced by THE PHANTOM MENACE crowds can find other cinematic diversions this June, such as Disney's adventurously animated version of TARZAN, featuring the voices of Tony Goldwyn, Minnie Driver, and Glenn Close; CHILL FACTOR (Warner Bros.), a comedy-action-thriller co-scripted by novelist Caleb Carr (*The Alienist*) and starring Peter Firth and Cuba Gooding Jr.; and Mike Myers' randy return in AUSTIN POWERS: THE SPY WHO SHAGGED ME (New Line Cinema), featuring bodacious birds Heather Graham, Kristen Johnson, and Elizabeth Hurley.

The late Stanley Kubrick's long-awaited swan song, the kinky thriller EYES WIDE SHUT (Warner Bros.) starring Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, opens in July, along with a pair of dubious TV adaptations: Disney's INSPECTOR GADGET, starring Matthew Broderick and Joely Fisher, and THE WILD, WILD WEST (Warner Bros.) from the MEN IN BLACK duo of director Barry Sonnenfeld and performer Will Smith. GADGET, needless to say, will be gimmicky, Smith is no one but Sonnenfeld's idea of the Western character created by Robert Conrad, and Cruise and Kidman are suing over rumors that they required professional sex therapists to make their onscreen love scenes believable.

Other July releases look a bit more promising. DreamWorks' THE HAUNTING, director Jan (TWISTER) DeBont's adaptation of Shirley Jackson's novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, stars Lili Taylor, Liam Neeson, Catherine Zeta Jones, and Bruce Dern, among others. The unsettling supernatural thriller STIGMATA (MGM) features Gabriel Byrne as a priest who investigates a supposedly possessed Patricia Arquette for signs of the religious lacerations of the title.

Not to be missed this July is the independent horror THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT (Artisan), which threw quite a scare into viewers at the Sundance Film Festival. The cinema verité-style feature tells the tale of a trio of camera-toting college students who document their excursion into the Black Hills Forest of Maryland to investigate a gruesome local legend. To reveal any more of the plot would be unfair—let's just say it ain't no spring break for these kids.

More Movie Mayhem

Orbiting theaters in August is the sci-fi thriller THE ASTRONAUT'S WIFE (New Line), in which spaceman Johnny Depp returns from outer space, hangs up his helmet, and starts acting mighty peculiar. Classy blonde Charlize Theron—the spouse of the title—begins to suspect that she may have married a monster from you-know-where. The film also features the fine character actors Joe Morton and Tom Noonan.

Johnny Depp makes yet another appearance in August, playing a rare book dealer hired to collect a set of demonic texts used to summon the ultimate evil . . . no, not Bill Gates—it's THE NINTH GATE (Artisan), directed and cowritten by Roman Polanski. Lena Olin and Frank Langella costar. Also due in August are Touchstone's THE 13th WARRIOR (the

Hurley, Jeffrey Combs, Famke Janssen, and Oscar winner Geoffrey Rush doing his best Vincent Price impression.

Future Features

In New Line's October release LOST SOULS, Winona Ryder tries to convince a lawyer that he will unwittingly cause the rise of Lucifer in human form. (In other words, another lawyer.) Also arriving in October: THE CROW: SALVATION (Dimension); outer-space actioner SUPERNOVA (MGM) from director Walter Hill; horror spoof SCREAM IF YOU KNOW WHAT I DID LAST HALLOWEEN (Dimension); and NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD: THE SPECIAL EDITION, with a refurbished soundtrack and 15 minutes of newly-filmed footage by the original 1968 cast and crew (but without the participation of director George A. Romero).

Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" has been called the USA's first homegrown horror story. Director Tim Burton's lavish adaptation, SLEEPY HOLLOW (Paramount), arrives in theaters in November with Johnny Depp, Christina Ricci, and Casper Van Dien in the lead roles. November also brings THE END OF DAYS (Universal), the demonic millennial thriller starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Satan; James Bond's 19th adventure THE WORLD IS NOT ENOUGH (United Artists); and Paramount's adaptation of the Patricia Highsmith bisexual thriller THE TALENTED MR. RIPLEY, starring Oscar winners Matt Damon and Gwyneth Paltrow, along with Cate Blanchett.

Tentatively scheduled for December: the sequels SCREAM 3 (Dimension) and MISSION IMPOSSIBLE 2 (Paramount); Stephen King's THE GREEN MILE (Warner Bros.), starring Tom Hanks; and Disney's adaptation of Isaac Asimov's BICENTENNIAL MAN, starring Robin Williams as an android who becomes more human with each passing century. (See Forry Ackerman's column on page 44 for some fascinating background about this story.) The winsome Embeth Davitz of FALLEN costars.

FANTASIA 2000, Disney's reworking of its animated classic, features six new animated segments along with three originals from the 1940 version. (As sacrilegious as this project may seem, it was Walt Disney's original intent for FANTASIA to be reissued periodically with varying elements, like the changing program of a classical concert series.) On

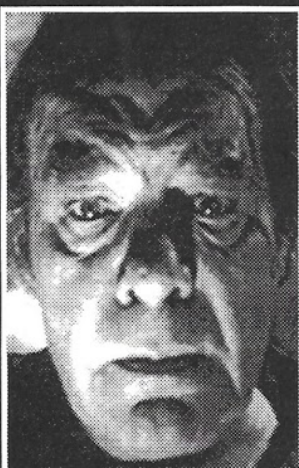


What's with the favorable buzz about THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT? Find out in July!

long-shelved Michael Crichton horror with Antonio Banderas and Omar Sharif) and SCREAM swami Kevin Williamson's directorial debut TEACHING MRS. TINGLE (Dimension), a comic thriller about a sinister teacher (Helen Mirren) whose demise is plotted by a band of attractive teens—Williamson's trademark.

Tentatively scheduled for release in September are the paranormal chiller THE SIXTH SENSE (Hollywood Pictures), starring Bruce Willis; the serial killer thriller THE BONE COLLECTOR (Universal), featuring Denzel Washington and Angelina Jolie; Richard Matheson's psychic murder mystery A STIR OF ECHOES (Artisan), starring Kevin Bacon; and the monsterama FREDDY VS. JASON (New Line), directed by makeup maven Rob Bottin. Also making a possible September appearance is the remake of William Castle's 1958 spookfest THE HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL (Dark Castle/Warner Bros.) from TALES FROM THE CRYPT producers Joel Silver and Robert Zemeckis, starring Elizabeth

Continued on page 15



13 Demon Street

13 DEMON STREET • 1960 • b&w • Sweden • in English with Swedish subtitles
thirteen 23 minute episodes hosted by Lon Chaney Jr.

"Number 13 Demon Street. I am condemned to live here. To suffer on this earth forever as a punishment for my crime. It is said that no greater outrage was ever committed by a mortal. But should I find a crime more terrible than mine, my punishment will end." — LON CHANEY JR.

Somewhere between *One Step Beyond* and *Thriller* lies *13 Demon Street*, a thirteen episode television show created and directed by Hollywood horror veteran, CURT SIODMAK, hosted by a disheveled LON CHANEY JR., and shot in Sweden. After directing the pilot for Hammer's unsold *Tales of Frankenstein* ('58), Siodmak made a deal with LEO GUILD and KENNETH HERTS to shoot a supernatural horror anthology, *13 Demon Street*, in Stockholm's Nordisk Tonefilm studio in 1960.

But while the TV version of *13 Demon Street* was never broadcast in the U.S., it was aired in Sweden (with the simple addition of Swedish subtitles). And that's what we've found. Direct from the Land of the Midnight Sun and transferred from 35mm prints, comes this incredibly rare Something Weird exclusive, the original thirteen episodes of *13 Demon Street*. Boo!

13 Demon Street. VOLUME 1

THE BLACK HAND

When his car is hit by a speeding driver, Dr. Heinz Schloss, a brilliant surgeon, removes his pinned hand by severing it with a scalpel. Since the driver of the other car, Erich Münster, was killed in the crash, Schloss replaces his missing hand with one of Erich's. Oops! Turns out that Mr. Münster was a psychopathic strangler of five, and before you can say, "The Hands of Orlac," the new hand of Heinz is taking on a homicidal life all its own.

FEVER

During a flu epidemic, Dr. Franz makes a housecall to crazed artist Otto Szegety, whose dingy flat is covered with paintings of the same beautiful woman. Asked who the model is, Szegety hisses, "She's mine!" But when the doctor looks out Szegety's window, he's startled to see the woman from the paintings smiling seductively at him from her house across the courtyard. A house which, apparently, doesn't really exist...

CONDEMNED IN THE CRYSTAL

"It would be awful to learn one's future," says John Radian, a man with a "fear of the future," who's suffering from a recurring nightmare in which he's drawn to a dilapidated building in a fog-shrouded alley and wakes up screaming. On the advice of his shrink, he locates the building while awake and discovers it's occupied by Madame Germaine, a fortune teller who looks into her crystal ball and tells him that he will die at midnight. How? She will be his killer... #6666



13 Demon Street. VOLUME 2

GREEN ARE THE LEAVES

A television crew arrives at Sweden's Stafsholm's Castle in the hopes of broadcasting a murderous ghost who dwells in one of the bedrooms. But when a crew member is found choked to death in the room, TV host Henry Waller and his girlfriend, Denise, foolishly decide to spend the night in the haunted bedroom. Sure enough, they too find themselves being suffocated as the dapper ghost of Erik Kirsten strolls out from an ancient painting...

THE GIRL IN THE GLACIER

A chunk of glacier is struck in a mine shaft with the figure of a nude woman, guessed to be 50,000 years old, frozen in the ice. Bringing the chunk of ice to a museum, Dr. Sven Sjöström immediately falls in love with the woman entombed in it (whom he calls Angelica) and gets upset when Olsen, a rival scientist, suggests melting the ice. Wanting her all to himself, Sven kills Olsen, buys his girlfriend-on-ice a dress and pair of shoes (!), and is shocked when she suddenly opens her eyes...

THE BOOK OF GHOULS

Finding a ritual that guarantees "untold wealth" in an old tomb, Anton Lupesco goes on a bizarre scavenger hunt in which he must bury the beak of a raven in the oldest grave in the cemetery, steal "an omen of death" from antique shopkeeper CURT SIODMAK in a silent cameo, and seek out a man who does evil and kill him. But — surprise! — there's a tiny detail he's overlooked... #6667

13 Demon Street. VOLUME 3

THE PHOTOGRAPH

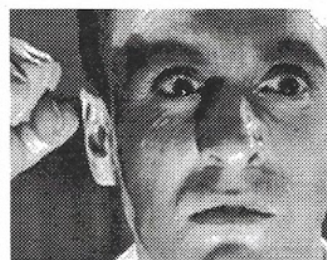
After hot shot photographer Donald Powell takes a photo of a farmhouse in snowy Maine, a beautiful woman emerges from it. He tries to embrace her but ends up strangling the woman instead. Back in New York, the photo holds a macabre surprise for him: every time he looks at it, he sees the murdered woman coming closer and closer... And watch for director CURT SIODMAK in a cameo ("I came for my dog!") that was cut when this episode was included in *The Devil's Messenger*.

THE VINE OF DEATH

Museum curator Frank Dylan is thrilled to acquire the bulbs of the ancient Mirada "death vine," puts a bulb in his pocket, and rushes home to plant it. Instead, he stumbles in on Wally, his slimy neighbor, putting the moves on his wife. After a struggle ends up in Frank being killed, his body is buried in the hot house and the death vine quickly sprouts. But as Wally soon learns, the vine is "attracted by the heat of a human body" which it wraps around and strangles... As Chaney neatly explains, "I want you to see a man who wanted to plant a flower, instead of which he dug his own grave..."

A GIFT OF MURDER

At an anniversary party, Jim and Betty Duncan receive a Haitian voodoo doll as an anonymous present, complete with instructions on how to kill one's enemies. After using the doll to eliminate two rivals at work, Jim falls in love with a secretary and decides to get rid of his wife. But as he sticks the pin in the doll's face, he doesn't notice that it's been tampered with... #6668



13 Demon Street. VOLUME 4

THE SECRET OF THE TELESCOPE

Paul Kessler buys an antique telescope at an auction. It seems ordinary enough until he looks out the window with it and sees a vision of his dead self. Convinced that his death could only be the result of his alcoholic wife murdering him, he decides to off her first by putting rat poison in her decanter of booze... (The wrap-up shows Chaney inexplicably cackling at the contents of a malignant dollhouse!)

NEVER STEAL A WARLOCK'S WIFE

Milksop banker Hubert Ames can't afford to provide his sultry wife with the wealth, clothing, and jewelry she demands, so he tries to acquire them via witchcraft. She's unimpressed: "You do the incantations and I'll do the dishes." But when he discovers that she's running away with her illicit boyfriend, Hubert reads from *The Science of Necromancy*, takes advice from a witch's cat, and conjures up a road full of flames for the fleeing lovers...

MURDER IN THE MIRROR

Hired by creepy Count Ottocar Potosi to find a specific antique mirror, Antonio Martinelli is horrified when the mirror shows him a vision of the Count suffocating Mario, his wife's lover — a murder that occurred thirty years earlier and created by the victim's "energy engraved on the glass..."

BLACK NEMESIS

Phony medium "Monsieur" Aramit kills Dr. Robert Standish in order to scam his bereaved widow for some quick cash to pay off a gambling debt. All goes well until the doctor unexpectedly materializes when he isn't supposed to... #6669

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Thanking the Monkey:

PLANET OF THE APES

20th Century Fox's 30th Anniversary release of the five **PLANET OF THE APES** films on five separate laserdiscs is a dream come true. Each film has been digitally mastered with wide-screen THX transfers in the original 2.35:1 aspect ratio. Theatrical trailers are included. The cover art graphics are stunning, utilizing a different primary color for each film's jacket to tint a masterful blend of an original painting and a computer-enhanced photograph. This is clearly the most impressive home video package I've seen for any format.

The movie that started it all, **PLANET OF THE APES** (1968), still stands 31 years later as a true classic of science fiction. The story, acting, and makeup are still innovative and bold. But for a few odd moments that tip off the viewer that it was made in the sixties, the film has a timeless quality to it. Charlton Heston is perfect as the cynical paragon of American Man, an astronaut crash-landed on an unknown planet ruled by apes. He is hunted, harmed, and humiliated by the time we reach the film's unforgettable conclusion. Equally brilliant performances from Roddy McDowall, Kim Hunter, and Maurice Evans immerse us in this stark future. Amid such veteran talent it is easy to dismiss Linda Harrison's portrayal of the mute Nova as mere cheesecake. Though she does little more than emulate Raquel Welch's loincloth look from **ONE MILLION YEARS B.C.** in this initial outing, that alters somewhat in the first sequel.

BENEATH THE PLANET OF THE APES (1970) is a memorable film that holds its own against its predecessor. Despite the absence of McDowall, the acting remains strong from the returning principals, and Nova becomes the link between the two stories. Director

Ted Post employs Nova in many clever ways, using her reactions as a barometer for the events unfolding before her and Brent, the astronaut sent to find out what happened to Taylor. While obviously chosen for his Hestonesque rugged good looks, James Franciscus does a fine job in this role, particularly when he encounters radiation-mutated human beings still living in the forbidden zone. The plot takes us to an inevitable showdown between apes and mutants. The creative sets and careful matte work depicting a nuclear ravaged New York City subway system are spectacular. The old pan and scan videotape of this film is pathetic by comparison.

The third installment, **ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF THE APES** (1971), has Roddy McDowall and Kim Hunter reprising their roles as Cornelius and Zira. Thanks to the genius of Dr. Milo (Sal Mineo, in a very small role), they manage to repair Taylor's ship and avoid the destructive finale of **BENEATH**, back in time to 1973. (If we assume there were enough parts to cannibalize from Brent's ship to repair Taylor's, the suspension of disbelief seems easier to accommodate.) The first half of **ESCAPE** is lighthearted and humorous, as the apes become celebrities while adjusting to human society. Gradually the mood shifts, as a suspicious government agent (effectively played by Eric Braeden) interrogates the now-pregnant Zira until she reveals mankind's eventual fate. Soon she and Cornelius are being hunted, the government out to prevent their baby's birth. The film ends with their tragic deaths, but not before a sympathetic circus owner, Armando (Ricardo Montalban), helps them switch their child with a baby chimp from his circus.

CONQUEST OF THE PLANET OF THE APES (1972) continues the saga years later with the fully-grown son of Cornelius and Zira, Caesar (McDowall again). A mysterious plague has wiped out all dogs and cats, resulting in apes being domesticated and turned into slaves. Caesar is appalled at the inhumane treatment and voices his anger. Armando is interrogated and killed by the authorities, who now realize that he

switched the baby apes (and made monkeys out of them). Learning of Armando's death, Caesar organizes the apes and plots a rebellion against their cruel masters.

This is understandably the darkest and most violent chapter of the saga. The acting and storyline are its strengths, since the budget cuts for each succeeding film had by this time become noticeable. Montalban and McDowall convey a broad range of emotion. Of interesting note is Natalie Trundy as the female ape Lisa. Trundy had previously appeared as Albina (a mutant in **BENEATH**) and Dr. Stephanie Branton (the sympathetic animal psychologist in **ESCAPE**).

BATTLE FOR THE PLANET OF THE APES (1973) brings the cycle full-circle. Caesar rules over a small community following the war between man and ape. He finds himself in a fight with the gorilla leader, Aldo (Claude Akins), as well as mutant human survivors from the city, who descend upon the ape village. (Sharp-eyed viewers will find a young John Landis as the afro-wearing human who is handed the reins of Aldo's horse when the gorilla stops to help repair a wagon.) After defeating the mutants and Aldo, Caesar decides he is no better than man and vows to create a future in which man and apes might live together peacefully. Six hundred years later, we witness the wisest of apes, the Lawgiver (John Huston), teaching both ape and human children about Caesar.

Although four different directors made these five films, the irony and clever nuances throughout the storyline are of a piece and ingenious. Despite each successive film crew being forced to create magic with increasingly smaller budgets, the films hold together quite well. What keeps the Ape Series fresh is the combination of political and social satire with a serious inquiry of issues still relevant today. Their appeal also lies in their ability to cross age, race, and gender barriers. The Planet Of The Apes Saga is that rare work of art that entertains on a multitude of levels.

—Michael D. Walker



NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 12

December 17th, FANTASIA 2000 premieres at a gala screening in New York's Carnegie Hall, with live accompaniment from The London Philharmonic Orchestra. After identical events in London (at the Albert Hall), Paris, Tokyo, and Southern California, a worldwide release at Imax theaters is scheduled to begin in January.

Frankenstein Unwound

The news is very scary indeed concerning the computer-animated FRANKENSTEIN feature being coproduced by Universal and Industrial Light and Magic. This project, the first all-digital animated dramatic film (profiled in the previous issue of *Scarlet Street*) may not end up so dramatic after all. Universal has fired original screenwriters Brent Maddock and S. S. Wilson (Maddock has also been removed as codirector) and is reportedly rethinking their approach to the storyline.

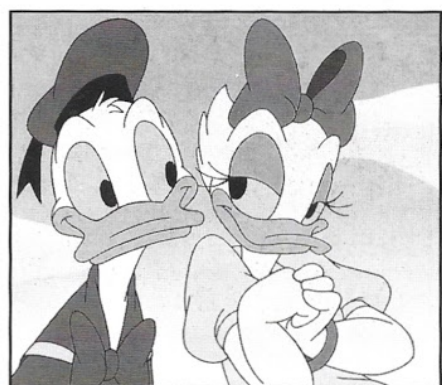
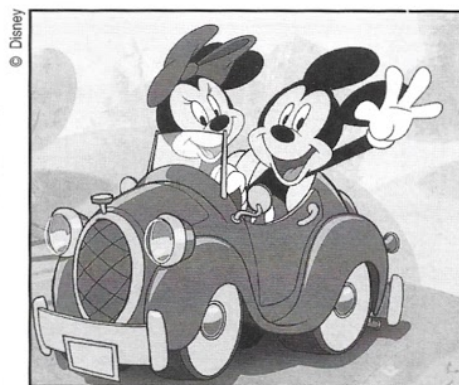
As trumpeted in Universal's press releases for the feature last fall, Maddock and Wilson's screenplay remained thematically true to the classic thirties and forties Frankenstein features, picking up where the 1931 Karloff original left off. Characters and elements borrowed from BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN and FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN were incorporated into the new tale of a search by Henry Frankenstein and his mentor Dr. Pretorius for the remains of the long-dead Monster. The power contained within the creature's electrodes is being sought by the scientists' wealthy, mysterious patron to cure his equally mysterious illness—which makes him a tiny bit furry around the edges during a full moon.

But now the monsters may turn out more like Munsters. A new team of writers has been hired by Universal to give the Gothic goings-on a comedic spin. Horror fans excited about this project may be treated to something more kid-friendly than Karloffian. Will Universal's animated FRANKENSTEIN include happy songs and funny talking animals? Only time will tell. Keep the torches handy, villagers.

Scary Scuttlebutt

Zombie godfather George A. Romero will bond with BOUND brothers Larry and Andy Wachowski (auteurs of the cyberhit THE MATRIX) for a "house-that-dripped-lots-of-blood" chiller entitled CARNIVORE. The Wachowski siblings—who wrote the script several years ago—will coproduce the Trimark feature with Romero. The plot concerns some wealthy folks who vanish mysteriously from a boarding house. We'll bet the house contains a peckish pet or two.

Box office champ Will Smith is remaking Val Lewton's CAT PEOPLE. The former Fresh Prince—and current (lord help us) agent James West—will produce an update of the classic 1942 chiller for Universal. The plot, you'll recall, concerns a covert clan of individuals that



Fans of classic cartoon characters will want to catch up with Mickey and Minnie Mouse (LEFT); Donald and Daisy Duck (RIGHT); Goofy; Pluto; Huey, Dewey, and Louie; Black Pete; and Ludwig Von Drake on ABC's DISNEY'S MICKEY MOUSEWORKS. Check your local listings.

turn into felines when aroused (but are easily called out of hiding by the sound of an electric can opener). Paul Schrader wrote and directed an equally unrequested remake in 1982 with Nastassja Kinski memorably portraying one of the titular tabbies.

H. G. Wells' classic *The Time Machine* is headed for the silver screen again, this time to be produced (and possibly directed) by Steven Spielberg. The DreamWorks/Warner Bros. coproduction will be adapted by screenwriter John Logan (who also adapted Richard Matheson's as yet unfilmed I AM LEGEND for Warners). A possible summer 2000 release is contemplated.

Updates Aplenty

The aforementioned Richard Matheson adaptation I AM LEGEND may finally see the light of day—unlike the vampiric villains of the tale—with X-FILES director Rob Bowman at the helm and Arnold Schwarzenegger still a possibility to portray the last man on earth.

Steven Spielberg said in a recent interview that he hopes to see INDIANA JONES 4 in theaters no later than the summer of 2001. So does The Hound. Get that bullwhip cracking, Mr. S.

The latest word on the on-again-off-again BATMAN franchise is that it's on again. Warner Bros. plans a 2000 or 2001 release for BATMAN 5. Now all they need is a script and a cast. They've managed with less.

Television Thrills

Steven Spielberg will produce a 20-hour miniseries for the Sci-Fi Channel entitled TAKEN. Based on an original premise by Spielberg, TAKEN is a decades-spanning alien abduction epic, starting from New Mexico in the forties and continuing to the present day. Cast and crew have yet to be selected, but the project is expected to be huge. Sci-Fi's tentative plan is to premiere the series in the Summer of 2000.

Public Broadcasting's MYSTERY!, originated by Boston's WGBH, will be back this fall for its 20th season. The offerings this time include SECOND SIGHT, featuring the adventures of a blind detective. Among the returning se-

ries are new episodes of P.D. James' AN UNSUITABLE JOB FOR A WOMAN, starring Helen Baxendale as private eye Cordelia Gray, and new installments of TOUCHING EVIL, featuring Robson Green as blue-eyed, studly Detective Inspector Creegan.

The Home Video Vault

The Oscar-winning (Bill Condon, for Best Screenplay Adaptation) GODS AND MONSTERS, starring Ian McKellen as director James Whale, will at last be available on VHS for rental in June from Universal Home Video (and available for purchase on DVD for \$34.98). Also on hand for rental in June are Gus Van Sant's by-the-numbers PSYCHO remake (Universal; \$34.98 for laserdisc or DVD), Stephen King's 1999 miniseries STORM OF THE CENTURY from Trimark, and the high-school horror flick THE FACULTY from Dimension (\$39.99 on laser). The Jamie Lee Curtis sci-fi actioner VIRUS becomes available for rental in July (\$29.98 for the DVD).

A PERFECT MURDER, the 1998 update of DIAL "M" FOR MURDER starring Michael Douglas, is back in video stores in a Warner Home Video collector's edition (\$19.98), which includes a behind-the-scenes documentary and an alternate ending. Also available from Warners are a collector's edition of the 1982 MAD MAX sequel THE ROAD WARRIOR with a new "making-of" documentary attached (\$19.98), and priced-to-sell reissues of the Wesley Snipes vampire actioner BLADE and the rather disappointing feature version of THE AVENGERS (\$14.98 each).

Fox Video has reissued ALIEN RESURRECTION on VHS at the bargain price of \$14.98 for the pan-and-scan version, \$19.98 for the widescreen edition, and \$29.98 for the DVD. Or get an ALIEN overdose with the VHS boxed set of all four films in the series—plus a bonus 20th anniversary tribute tape—for \$54.98 (\$59.98 for widescreen; \$109.98 for the DVD set).

A major reissue of Stanley Kubrick features is planned by Warner Home Video in July, concurrent with the the-

Continued on page 16

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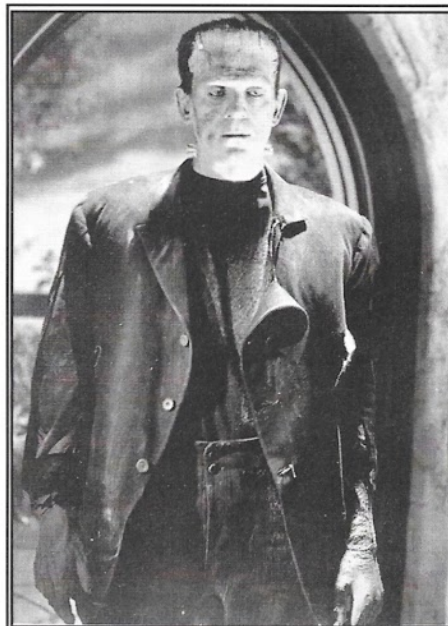
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NEWS HOUND

Continued from page 15

atrical release of Kubrick's ultra-sexy **EYES WIDE SHUT**. Included in the collection is a special edition of **THE SHINING** with a new behind-the-scenes documentary attached, directed by Kubrick's daughter.

Resourceful laserdisc collectors can find the 1974 Canadian chiller **BLACK CHRISTMAS** (Warner, \$29.98) this June, and in July can feast on Frank Hennenlotter's 1988 gorefest **BRAIN DAMAGE** (\$49.98, with special guest voice Zachery) and the Japanese flying turtle epics **GAMERA VS. GUILLON** and **GAMERA VS. ZIGRA** (\$39.95 each). All three are available from Synapse Laser.

DVD fans in June can revel in sixties space psychedelia and Jane Fonda's well-toned body with Paramount Home Video's letterboxed release of **BARBAR-ELLA** (1968; \$29.99), and can acquire the first (and only good) Filipino horror film, the mad scientist melodrama **TER-ROR IS A MAN** (1959), for \$24.99 from Image Entertainment. (The liner notes include a quote from *Scarlet Street's* own coverage of this sci-fier in Issue #23)

Also coming to DVD in June is The Roan Group's \$59.95 boxed set of Boris Karloff's five Mr. Wong mysteries: **MR. WONG, DETECTIVE** (1938), **THE MYSTERY OF MR. WONG** (1939), **MR. WONG IN CHINATOWN** (1939), **THE FATAL HOUR** (1940), and **DOOMED TO DIE** (1940), plus the final Mr. Wong entry, **PHANTOM OF CHINATOWN** (1940), starring Keye Luke.

Other upcoming DVD releases include Rondo Hatton's 1946 star turn in **THE BRUTE MAN** (available for \$19.99 from Image in July), and a letterboxed

release of 1988's **HALLOWEEN 4** (\$24.98 from Anchor Bay; in stores in August).

The ultimate video release of James Whale's classic **THE OLD DARK HOUSE** (1932) has arrived on DVD from Image Entertainment. In addition to the best-available video transfer, this special edition provides an interview with Whale's friend (and *Scarlet Street* interviewee) director Curtis Harrington, and two audio commentary tracks: one by Whale biographer James Curtis and another by **OLD DARK HOUSE** and **TITANIC** star Gloria Stuart (also a *Scarlet Street* interview subject back in issue #28).

Fearsome Flotsam

Planet of the Apes Revisited, the long-awaited book on the 20th Century Fox film series, will soon be published by St. Martin's Press. Fifteen years in the making, the volume (by Joe Russo and Larry Landsman with Ed Gross) includes interviews with virtually all the producers, directors, cast, and crew members from the Apes saga—many now deceased—as well as rare photos from private collections. For a preview, visit the book section of "The Forbidden Zone" website at <http://members.aol.com/rogerapple/forbiddenzone.html>.

Was he really the son of Sherlock Holmes? Rex Stout's legendary detective-gourmand Nero Wolfe is the subject of a pair of excellent websites. Muffy Barkocy's nicely designed site provides a fine overview of Wolfe and his world, and even includes a floor plan of the detective's West 35th Street brownstone (http://www.things.org/%7Emuffy/pages/books/rex_stout/nero_wolfe.html). Web designer and book collector David E. Patty maintains

a site that includes a comprehensive collection of cover art from Wolfe paperbacks (http://members.xoom.com/Nero_Wolfe/indexnw.html).

Sonic Images has released a new CD entitled **THE SNOW FILES: THE FILM MUSIC OF MARK SNOW**, which despite its title focuses on the prolific composer's telethemes, including suites from **LA FEMME NIKITA**, **MAX HEADROOM**, and, of course, **THE X-FILES**.

The first in a series of soundtrack CDs from the Steven Spielberg TV series **AMAZING STORIES** is available from Varese Sarabande. Music by John Williams and George Delerue is featured in Volume One, and future releases will include scores by Jerry Goldsmith, James Horner, John Addison, and many others. Visit Varese's website at <http://www.VareseSarabande.com/>.

Gone, but never to be forgotten: film critic Gene Siskel; cartoonist Lee Falk; voice actor Jean Vander Pyl (Wilma Flintstone); radio and TV announcer Bill Wendell; composers Ernest Gold, Lionel Bart, and Fred Myrow; film music conductor Charles Gerhardt; screenwriters Ray Russell and Howard R. Cohen; actor/songwriter Anthony Newley; ventriloquist Señor Wences; stuntman Gil Perkins; producer Aubrey Schenck; directors Joe D'Amato, Garson Kanin, and Stanley Kubrick; and actors Rory Calhoun, Bert Remsen, Elspeth March, Bobby Troup, David Strickland, Dirk Bogarde, Susan Strasberg, Shirley Stoler, Charles "Buddy" Rogers, Lee Philips, Richard Kiley, Huntz Hall, Peggy Cass, Faith Domergue, Ellen Corby, Del Close, Dana Plato, and the silver screen's original high-flying Man of Steel, Kirk Alyn.



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Surfin' the Jungle *Disney's Tarzan*

by Drew Sullivan

Ugh—here's the reaa, the unabashed rep on Disney's TARZAN. This latest animated feature from the studio that created animated features tells the tale of Lord Greystoke, who, as an eta and doubtless eho-lul balu, finds himself alone in the kambo when his kalu and pastar bite the zu one.

Discovered and adopted by the lu mangani, the child has a seriously es time of it as an ab, constantly getting into (and losing) bars because of his glib lus. (But, then, don't we all?) Eventually, the eta lord grows up to be the ko Tarzan, King of the Kambo. He learns that he is tarmangani and sets out to find his own sato, which he does in the form of the mucho-koho Jane Porter.

Like just about everything these days, Disney's TARZAN showcases new state-of-the-art computer techniques, which, while visually stunning, more often than not lack the warmth and heart of work performed by human hands. (For all the advances in animation, no one has ever been able to match 1937's SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS and 1940's PINOCCHIO for sheer breathtaking artistry.) It stars the vocal talents of Tony Goldwyn as Tarzan; Minnie Driver as Jane Porter; Rosie O'Donnell as an ape named Terk (not to be found in the Edgar Rice Burroughs Tarzan novels, needless to say); Glenn Close as Tarzan's ape mother, Kala; Lance Henriksen as Kerchak, the leader of the Great Apes; Wayne Knight as Tantor, the elephant; Brian Blessed as the villainous jungle guide, Clayton; and the wonderful Nigel Hawthorne as Professor Porter, Jane's father.

This being Disney, TARZAN is not just a jungle adventure; it's a musical, too. The film features five songs by Phil Collins: "Two Worlds," "You'll Be In My Heart," "Son of Man," "Strangers Like Me," and "Trashing the Camp," the last reportedly the only song actually performed by an onscreen character, the others serving as background score. According to the film's production notes, Rosie O'Donnell was thrilled to be offered the part of Terk, but "she did have one rather specific demand." (Only one? I guess everyone has their off days.) Said Rosie:

"I told them I have to have a song. I love the Disney musical legacy and I really wanted to be part of it. Working with Phil Collins on the 'Trashing the Camp' number was a lot of fun."

One naturally shares Rosie's appreciation of the "Disney musical legacy," but for those who have heard her voo-voo on Broadway in GREASE, on the televised Tony Awards, or on her own talk show, one can only remark that surely, in a situation such as this, tand-panda is bal.

As if to prove the danger in letting Rosie O'Donnell voo-voo, Phil Collins wound up beating himself up during the recording session. The number features a number of animals romping through a human camp, making music with whatever they find. In order to get the right sounds, Collins says, "I went around the studio bashing things with my hands and with the drumsticks. Everybody was looking at me like I was crazy. Eventually I hit myself on the forehead with my fists, and they said, 'That's it!' We only did a couple of takes, but the next day my head was all red. In the next session, we sent some guys to go out and get some pots and pans for the drum duet, where a couple of gorillas are challenging each other. It was great fun."

And, one hopes, less painful . . .

Disney's TARZAN is supposed to remain more faithful to the original Burroughs novel than most every other film version of the story, so at last we may learn some hitherto unrevealed facts about the koho—pardon, ko ape man. What is his favorite den? Is wa his favorite color? (He's out of luck if it isn't.) What does he look for in the perfect por? Is he an eho-nala or an ug?

At least, unlike Casper Van Dien's whispery jungle lord in the recent TARZAN AND THE LOST CITY (1998), Disney's ape man will sound like the real thing. According to Glen Keane, the artist in charge of animating Tarzan, "Tony Goldwyn's voice has real depth. There is a lower-register quality that has almost an animal sound to it. It works really well for the character."

A study in contrasts is Glenn Close and her two recent roles for Disney: as the sweet and caring Kala, who

PAGE 18: An example of the "surfboard" approach Disney has taken to the Lord of the Jungle's traditional swinging through the trees in the animated TARZAN. Talk about caloused feet! PAGE 19 TOP: Over 65 years after they first came to the screen in the roles, Johnny Weissmuller and Maureen O'Sullivan are still the Tarzan and Jane of choice among fans. They're pictured here in the best of their teamings: the classic TARZAN AND HIS MATE (1934). PAGE 19 MIDDLE: The rest of the family: Cheeta (played presumably by Cheeta) and Boy (played by Johnny Sheffield, who went on to further success as Bomba the Jungle Boy). PAGE 19 BOTTOM: Disney's Tarzan will undoubtedly be able to do things his human counterparts never quite managed, like making his hair blow dramatically in the breeze.

loves Tarzan with all her heart and considerable soul, and as the outrageously evil Cruella De Vil in the live-action version of 101 DALMATIANS (1996). "When I first heard my voice coming out of a gorilla," says Close, "it was shocking. My initial reaction was that my voice doesn't do her justice. Kala is such a wonderful character, and the animation is so extraordinary."

Wayne Knight, on the other hand, felt quite at home as an excitable elephant in a cartoon jungle. "I'm quite frenetic by nature. I can't see a lot of me in the facial expressions that he has, but I'm more interested in trying to become him. I'm hoping to see him on the screen, not me. The director remarked that I was born for this medium. I think that's because I'm just too much for human existence—I should be animated."

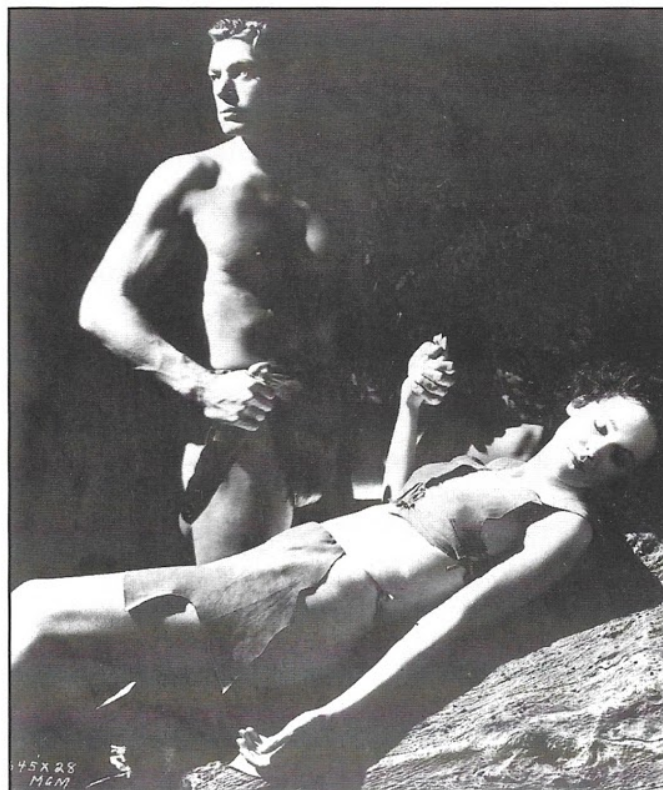
Sadly, the days when such beloved characters as Tarzan of the Apes, Sherlock Holmes, Charlie Chan, and the Thin Man regularly appeared at the local bijou are long gone. Will this latest TARZAN revive the ape man's movie career? We can only hope so.

Meanwhile, would it be asking too much of Richard Pele to give me an assignment that doesn't involve learning a whole new language?



APE-ENGLISH DICTIONARY

ab: boy	lu: fierce
bal: golden	lus: tongue
balu: baby	mangani: great apes
bar: battle	pastar: father
ben: great	pele: valley
bolgani: gorilla	por: mate
b'zee: foot	rea: word
dan: rock, stone	rep: truth
den: tree	sato: kind
dum-dum: gathering	tan: warrior
eho-dan: hard	tand-panda: silence
eho-lul: wet	tandutor: brave
eho-nala: top	tarmangani: white men
es: rough	ug: bottom
eta: little	ugh: okay
gree-ah: like, love	vando: good
gund: chief	vo: muscle
kalu: mother	voo-voo: sing
kambo: jungle	wa: green
ko: mighty	yang: swing
koho: hot	zu: big



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SCREEN...



and Screen AGAIN!

Scarlet Street's DVD and Laser Review

**TREASURES OF
THE TWILIGHT ZONE
MORE TREASURES OF
THE TWILIGHT ZONE**
Panasonic
DVD, \$24.95 each

Panasonic's inaugural TWILIGHT ZONE DVDs divide the contents of Fox Video's TREASURES OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE VHS twin-pack into two separate volumes. The first disc combines the pilot, "Where Is Everybody?" (10/2/59), with two episodes withheld from syndication: "The Encounter" (5/1/64), a politically incorrect exorcism of postwar anti-Japanese sentiment, and "An Occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge" (2/28/64), a 1962 French film purchased for use on THE TWILIGHT ZONE for \$10,000. MORE TREASURES OF THE TWILIGHT ZONE sandwiches "The Masks" (3/20/64) between two classics directed by Douglas Heyes, "Eye of the Beholder" (11/11/60), and "The Howling Man" (11/4/60). Each episode on MORE TREASURES is preceded by a "next week on THE TWILIGHT ZONE" teaser from the end of the previous week's show.

Both discs include the same extras: an "Inside The Twilight Zone" text scroll written by Marc Scott Zicree, a seven-minute promo reel in which Rod Serling attempts to entice first-season sponsors, and a 22-minute segment of THE MIKE WALLACE INTERVIEW from 1959. These artifacts capture an affable, self-effacing Serling, prior to the perfection of his icy, seemingly omniscient screen presence. (By contrast, Wallace's surly, tobacco-stained, mock-ingenuous persona already seems second nature.)

Each episode bears superimposed original broadcast dates carried over from the TREASURES tape set, belying the claim of remastering. Most of U.P.A. and Pacific Title's twinkly intermission

graphics have been deleted, eliminating the dramatic midpoint break. Other than the beat-up pitch reel and blurry Wallace video, the only significant print damage lays in the unaccountably dark, dupey main title to the pilot episode.

The rote duplication of the contents of the widely available TREASURES tape set is symptomatic of a lack of vision on Panasonic's part, and an underutilization of the DVD format's potential. In one of the few departures from the VHS presentation, the isolation of the pitch reel from the main feature disrupts its intended function as the introduction to "Where Is Everybody?" The pre-broadcast, FORBIDDEN PLANET-style title sequence of the pilot episode should have been included, along with 1958's rarely seen DESILU PLAYHOUSE try-out, "The Time Element."

The animated menus deploy the eyeball-in-space motif more imaginatively than the series' title sequence ever did, but the accompanying sound effects are far, far too loud. The "Inside The Twilight Zone" supplement—which, like the other bonus materials, is identical on both discs—appears to have been assembled in some haste: the type is too small, the supplement only covers the three episodes on the first disc, and fifth-season producer William Froug's surname is repeatedly misspelled. The discs are neither subtitled nor closed-captioned.

The stunning picture quality nearly renders Panasonic's lackadaisical programming and parsimonious allocation of three episodes per disc forgivable. Razor-edged detail, silky B&W tones, and an absence of transfer artifacts provide a startlingly immediate viewing experience. When Earl Holliman crashes into a hotel lobby mirror in "Where Is Everybody?" it's hard not to flinch.

—Michael Draine

THE MISS MARPLE COLLECTION MGM/UA

Sides One, Three, Four CLV, Two CAV
Sides One, Three, Four CLV, Two CAV
Laserdisc, \$39.98 per two-film set

MGM/Image have released the wonderful quartet of early to mid sixties British comic mysteries spotlighting Dame Margaret Rutherford's charming portrayal of Miss Jane Marple, one of Agatha Christie's trademark sleuths. Stringer Davis (Rutherford's real-life husband) and Charles Tingwell (who acted in two Hammer sequels, 1965's THE SECRET OF BLOOD ISLAND and 1966's DRACULA—PRINCE OF DARKNESS) also contributed recurring appearances throughout the series. All four films were directed by George Pollock, and boasted rollicking scores by Ron Goodwin. The lasers arrange them as double-bills: MURDER SHE SAID and MURDER MOST FOUL comprise one four-sided package, while MURDER AT THE GALLOP is paired with MURDER AHOY in the other set. This format sparks pleasurable recollections of the era in which these titles were frequently cobbled for art house screenings.

MURDER SHE SAID (1961) was freely adapted from the author's 1957 puzzler 4:50 From Paddington. Miss Marple's pleasant train ride through the English countryside is interrupted when she witnesses a woman being strangled on a passing train. Confronting police indifference when a corpse cannot be located, she decides to launch her own search. Because the alleged murder occurred near Ackenthorpe Hall, Miss Marple talks an employment agency into dispatching her to the Hall as a maid.

The aging Mr. Ackenthorpe (James Robertson-Justice) is a cantankerous man burdened with his adult children's squabbling over the family inheritance. Aside from the greedy male heirs, the family doctor, Quimper (Arthur Kennedy), is secretly romancing the patriarch's only daughter (Muriel Pavlow). The pool of possible suspects is further muddled by the groundskeeper (Michael Golden), who demonstrates proficiency at eliminating estate pests.

Miss Marple's conversations with the Hall's assorted denizens constitute the basis of her investigation. The senior Ackenthorpe banters with her repeatedly, clearly amused by her ability to withstand his withering asides. His grandson (Ronnie Raymond) is a precocious know-it-all who enjoys bad-mouthing his relatives, even while suspecting that the elderly woman isn't really a maid. The would-be inheritors tolerate her presence. As a domestic, after all, she's hardly worth their scrutiny.

With the help of her gentleman friend Mr. Stringer (Davis) and police Inspector Craddock (Tingwell), the doddering sleuth eventually solves the case. Despite two additional deaths, the mood is one of light humor and gentility. The verbal joustings between family members betray a humorous tone of strained civility, mir-

rored by Miss Marple's relationship with Craddock. While regarding her as a busy-body, he also respects her intuitive abilities. He also maneuvers to keep her out of harm's way when the case is about to break.

MURDER AT THE GALLOP (1963), based on Christie's *After the Funeral* (a 1953 mystery featuring Hercule Poirot), introduces another brood of scheming relatives. Old Enderby (Finlay Currie) dies suddenly, having willed his estate to be divided equally among four successors. Miss Marple chanced to witness his odd demise, so she decides to surreptitiously nose around in his affairs.

Although condescending at first, Inspector Craddock is troubled when she discovers the hatpin-impaled body of the deceased's sister. He confines the surviving family members to the Gallop, a riding academy inn owned by eccentric Hector Enderby (Robert Morley). The dead woman's domestic companion, Miss Gilchrest (Flora Robson), is invited to remain with the Enderby clan. Conveniently, Miss Marple procures lodgings at the Gallop for a "holiday." Hector is delighted, being familiar with her past accomplishments as an equestrienne. The others, especially Miss Gilchrest, regard her with some suspicion.

Soon enough, another male family member perishes. Although the two deceased Enderbys were seemingly killed by animals, Miss Marple strives to prove that true villainy walks on two legs. The Gallop's annual dance provides her with such an avenue. Garbed in a risqué black evening gown, she twists the night away with the dapper Mr. Stringer before suffering a histrionic heart attack. Craddock and a local physician then (amusingly) stage an impromptu playlet for the benefit of the suspected murderer, expressing grave concern for poor Miss Marple's "condition" while dropping hints that she was about to expose the killer. With the aging detective sequestered, the guilty party takes the bait, and is thus undone.

MURDER AT THE GALLOP would seem to be a thinly disguised remake of **MURDER SHE SAID**, however entertaining. In both, Miss Marple infiltrates opportunistic families whose members care only about what's coming to them (and who, in some cases, receive their just desserts). On ascertaining the evildoer's identity, she employs a similar modus operandi of pleading infirmity, thereby drawing her suspect into the open. Both films reward her with an unexpected marriage proposal, which she declines so as to remain available for Mr. Stringer.

The third Christie adaptation was **MURDER MOST FOUL** (1964), taken from yet another Poirot novel: *Mrs. McGinty's Dead* (1952). Miss Marple researches the circumstances of McGinty, a hanged woman with a theatrical past. Her trail leads to the Cosgood Players, a struggling repertory company. Driffold Cosgood (Ron Moody) is a mannered

director who allows her to sign on as an apprentice actress. He's unaware of her real purpose, hoping that she might become an angel for his troupe.

Following the subsequent murder of a company member, Cosgood divines an opportunity to capitalize on the garish newspaper headlines. The players begin to mount a musty murder mystery, **OUT OF THE STEWPOT**, with Miss Marple ironically cast "against type" as a lady detective! Unfortunately, one of the thespians is hatching a simultaneous plot of permanently silencing the new star while appearing to remain on stage during a performance.

The film offers an irresistible blend of laughs and chills. Ron Moody is a delight as the company impresario. He enacts Cosgood as a man of affectation who becomes flamboyant while treading the boards. Margaret Rutherford performs a show-stopping elocution of Robert W. Service's "The Shooting of Dan McGrew" for her character's audition piece. The climactic staging of the potboiler is an unadulterated romp. The snippets of the play's dialogue are marvelously tacky, especially as embellished by the Cosgood Players. At one point, their efforts are hilariously hamstrung by one of Inspector Craddock's operatives making an unscheduled cameo appearance on stage.

Structurally, **MURDER MOST FOUL** is arguably the most intricate of the quartet. Aside from the play within the film serving as the denouement, Cosgood's own seldom-produced (with good reason) manuscript **REMEMBER SEPTEMBER** helps Miss Marple trace the hanged woman's tribulations back nearly 13 years. The numerous members of the Cosgood ensemble provide a lengthier cast of suspects than the other films. This penultimate effort remains the sentimental favorite of many series devotees.

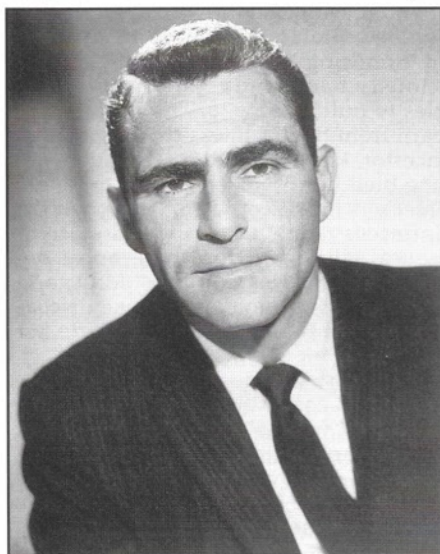
MURDER AHOY (also 1964) was an original screenplay by David Pursall and Jack Seddon, who had previously adapted the Christie novels. Miss Marple

has been appointed to the board of a youth reclamation trust. At her inaugural meeting, another trustee mysteriously expires just before expressing a few concerns regarding the administration of the *HMS Battledore*, a naval cadet ship utilized in the rehabilitation of young hooligans. Suspecting foul play, Miss Marple employs her Slogums Advanced Chemistry Set for Girls. Her research confirms that the victim was indeed snuffed—his favorite tobacco inhalant was contaminated with poison.

To the annoyance of fussy Captain de-Courcy Rhumstone (Lionel Jeffries), Miss Marple makes use of her trustee status to spend a couple of days aboard the vessel. She soon discovers that one of the adult role models, Lieutenant Compton (Francis Matthews, another Hammer veteran), is recruiting some of his young charges for shore-patrol burglaries. Compton himself becomes the next casualty, followed by the demise of another crew member. With ample evidence amassed, the unflappable sleuth orchestrates an attempt on her own life. Her fencing prowess, plus a timely assist from Mr. Stringer, saves the day.

The tone of **MURDER AHOY** signaled a shift to broader comedy. Miss Marple regularly crosses paths with Inspector Craddock: his repeated views of her posterior imply that she's always several steps ahead of him. Captain Rhumstone openly snivels about her intrusion into his command. Mr. Stringer himself briefly becomes a police suspect, due to coincidence. Even two of the murders seem more satirical than shocking; the snuff-box fatality is later trumped with a poisoning-by-mousetrap episode.

Regretfully, **MURDER AHOY** marked the end of the series. A few of the principals did resurface in a pair of 1966 Agatha Christie vehicles. George Pollock directed **TEN LITTLE INDIANS**, a disappointingly dour quasi-remake of **AND THEN THERE WERE NONE** (1945). It proved to be a humorless affair, excepting the performance of Wilfrid Hyde-



White. Margaret Rutherford and Stringer Davis reprised their roles for a cameo scene in *THE ALPHABET MURDERS* (starring Tony Randall as Poirot and featuring Marple veteran Robert Morley). With comic director Frank Tashlin at the helm, slapstick took precedence over subtlety. Neither of those exercises was able to recapture the sincerity, the genteel humor, and yes, the grace, of the four Pollock/Rutherford collaborations.

The Marple films remained popular theatrical attractions for many years after their debut. The mystery elements were flavorful enough, but the series' continuing appeal was largely thanks to the recurring personas. Miss Marple and Mr. Stringer shared a touching companionship, while her relationship with Inspector Craddock was equally captivating. Although sometimes accepting her help in a grudging fashion, the Inspector nevertheless clearly admired her intelligence and bravery. His honest concern for her safety prevented him from simply becoming a stereotypical comic foil. The genuine interaction among these three main characters drew repeat audiences to the repertory cinemas—even those who hadn't forgotten "whodunit."

Overall, the Image laserdiscs display the vintage materials in very good condition. The black-and-white contrasts have dulled with the passage of time, but the prints reveal only occasional speckles, blemishes, or artifacts. The four films have been presented in the 1:66-1 aspect ratio, which reveals a bit more of the Boreham Wood settings than previous VHS editions. All but *MURDER SHE SAID* have accompanying trailer previews. Intriguingly, the trailers for the two 1964 productions imply that those films should have been more severely matted, as the previews appear closer to an aspect ratio of 1:85-1. Despite that misgiving, the two twofers will be happy additions to many laserdisc collections.

—John F. Black

DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS

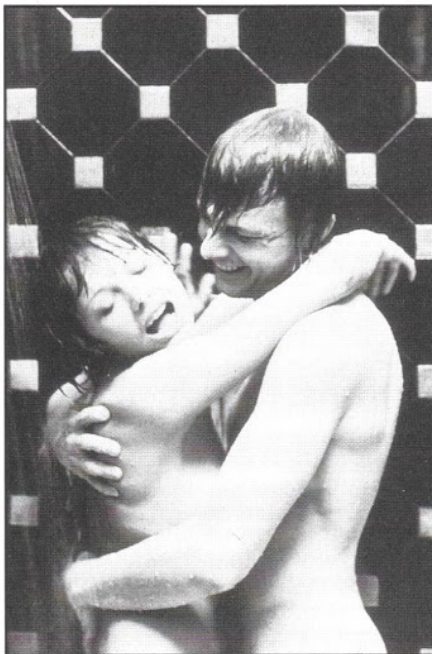
The Roan Group
Two Sides CLV
Laserdisc, \$49.95

"You don't love me, I don't love you . . . apparently we were made for each other." So says Stefan (John Karlen) to his new bride, Valerie (Danielle Ouimet), following the passionate lovemaking session that opens director Harry Kümel's colorful 1971 contribution to the lesbian vampire genre, *DAUGHTERS OF DARKNESS*. More than just another vampire boobey movie, it is a subtly chilling depiction of the human tendency to express our sexual and emotional roles through apathy and cruelty, even though all anyone really wants is someone to love.

Beautifully photographed against a breathtaking Belgian countryside, the drama unfolds thusly:

When their train is forced to make an unscheduled stop in Ostend, newlyweds Stefan and Valerie decide to spend the

night before continuing on to England to announce their marriage to Stefan's mother. They take residence in a beautiful seaside hotel, where Valerie, fearing that Stefan is deliberately delaying their voyage out of fear of his mother, or worse, shame of his bride, immediately insists he telephone mom. Stefan asks Pierre (Paul Esser), the nervous con-



cierge, to do so, but slips him a note to say there's no reply.

That night, two more guests arrive at the hotel: the lovely Countess Elizabeth Bathori (Delphine Seyrig)—whom Pierre recognizes as a hotel guest from 40 years earlier, looking not a day older—and her beautiful "secretary," Ilona (Andrea Rau). The Countess spies Stefan and Valerie in the dining room, and becomes immediately captivated with them, much to Ilona's dismay.

The next day in Brugge, the newlyweds come upon the scene of a murder, the fourth in a series of brutal slayings of young women, all completely drained of blood. Stefan is so morbidly fixated on glimpsing the corpse that he unconsciously backhands Valerie when she tries to pull him away. The couple later learn from the Countess that she had an ancestor, known as the Scarlet Countess, who bled hundreds of virgins to death. Valerie is horrified when Stefan and the Countess reach a heightened state of arousal while reciting the graphic details of the Scarlet Countess' M.O., and she flees to her room, where she discovers a naked Ilona prowling outside her window!

Naturally, Valerie wishes to leave immediately, cornering Stefan into calling "Mother," who is no mother at all, but an ex-(gasp!) male lover. Despite his obvious disapproval, "Mother" gives his blessing to the both of them. Obviously conflicted, Stefan hangs up the phone and turns on Valerie, giving her a bru-

tal goodnight belt-whipping! Early the next morning, Valerie takes flight from Stefan, but is swiftly apprehended by the Countess, who has her own plans for the newlyweds . . .

Without giving away the (admittedly, predictable) climax, I'll just tell you that, before the film ends, you will witness one snooping ex-detective, no less than two sex scenes, three bloody (albeit highly implausible) deaths, moonlit body-disposals, and a big damn explosion, just for good measure.

If history has taught us anything, it's that the world needs lesbian vampire movies, and plenty of 'em. Deliberately paced and heavy in mood, this is arguably one of the upper echelon of lesbian bloodsucker flicks, being more than just another card in the genre's deck. With emphasis on cerebral rather than physical titillation, it delivers eroticism aplenty without having to rely on gratuitous T&A (though genre dictates that it must also deliver at least some nekkid people, which it does). The relationships between the central characters are cruelly fascinating, since most of them are so out of touch with their true emotions that they lack the ability to express themselves with any degree of sincerity. Most of the acting is fine, particularly the edgy-eyed Esser, and Seyrig's Dietrichesque portrayal of the Countess (Dietrich is cited in the commentary as one of Kümel's big influences), though Danielle Ouimet has a tendency to look as though she just wandered into the wrong rest room by mistake. Despite the somewhat by-the-book plot line, Kümel's imaginative presentation of the material manages to keep things engaging through to the finale (though a yawn may creep in on repeated viewings).

Thanks to our friends at The Roan Group, this film is finally given the treatment it deserves. The laserdisc restores the film to its originally-intended length (we are reminded of this by the subheading "director's cut" superimposed in cheap white video titling over the title card), and its proper 1.66:1 aspect ratio. The image is crisp and vibrant (lending proper emphasis to Kümel's use of color—particularly red), and intrusions of speckling or video noise are almost nonexistent.

Analog Track One contains an audio commentary featuring John Karlen interviewed by David del Valle. Now, my first thought when I encounter a commentary in which the only participant is one single actor is, "Why bother?"—but I was pleasantly surprised by this one. Del Valle does an excellent job of prompting Karlen (at the very few points where he needs prompting), and Karlen proves to be an entertaining and informative commentator (though one wishes he would be a bit more candid, and elaborate on a few of the scandalous behind-the-scenes anecdotes at which he frequently hints). My advice? Pick this one up . . . you won't be disappointed.

—Tony Strauss

THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA
The Roan Group
Two Sides CLV
Laserdisc, \$49.95

Similar to the preceding *DRACULA A.D.1972* (1972), *THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA* (1973) concerns the Count's encroachment into "modern" London society. That particular concept pleased neither Hammer Films traditionalists nor general audiences. Warner Bros. even passed on the option of releasing the latter film stateside. In 1978, a small American company named Dynamite Entertainment exhibited it throughout drive-in theaters, retitled *COUNT DRACULA AND HIS VAMPIRE BRIDE*. The barely promoted product suffered an ignominious death.

That's a shame, in a way. *SATANIC RITES* is markedly superior to its predecessor, but its resemblance to a typical episode of *THE AVENGERS* tends to dilute its merits. Plot devices include governmental surveillance, gun-toting motorcyclists, powerful (and in this case, literally faceless) corporations, and the misappropriation of scientific intelligence. The look of a classic Hammer title was largely absent.

Christopher Lee, as usual, doesn't receive a majority of the screen time. Yet his participation, in what would prove to be his last turn as Dracula, is greater in impact than it was in the penultimate *DRACULA A.D.1972*. In that previous series entry, the concept of introducing the Count to modern-day England was squandered by confining Lee to the decaying ruins of an abandoned church. No midnight strolls through Piccadilly Circus, no trolling for victims along Carnaby Street....

SATANIC RITES casts Lee in the guise of a mysterious financier. In one of the film's most effective sequences, the descendant Van Helsing (Peter Cushing) is granted an audience with the reclusive executive. The magnate's face is partially obscured by his office lighting, and he

left in the dark until the vampire's true identity was exposed.

As Dracula, Lee has rather more to talk about than usual. His strategy involves the manipulation of prominent citizens to create a new strain of bubonic plague, thus propelling mankind to its Armageddon. It's refreshing to discover the Count implementing a genuine agenda, for a change. He's no longer sweating the small stuff. (Gone are the singular "You have failed me—you must be punished!" concerns of yore.)

As anticipated, Van Helsing is accorded a final opportunity to impale the bloodsucker. This act results in a slight variation of the archetypal disintegration sequence. Van Helsing craftily entices Dracula to pursue him through a thorny thicket of hawthorn trees. The Count becomes entangled as he frantically claws his way through the branches. Resultingly, when he finally emerges, he's entwined by a crown of thorns. It's an arresting image, as well as an ironic punishment for his attempt to invoke the Biblical prophecy of Armageddon.

THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA has been transferred in an aspect ratio of approximately 1:85-1. The source material boasts consistent color values, and appears free of blemishes and visual artifacts. Both sides have been pressed in the CLV format.

The laserdisc also provides two original trailer previews. The first of these is an English theatrical trailer displaying the contemporary setting. It juxtaposes the horror and the action-thriller motifs. The second preview is an American teaser for the alternately titled *COUNT DRACULA AND HIS VAMPIRE BRIDE*. The Yank trailer gleefully parades most of the nudity and gore segments, including Dracula's staking and disintegration! As if showing the climax wasn't enough of a cheat, the preview is restricted to scenes of Gothic horror and setting. Nowhere to be found are any hints of the production's modern milieu. For discriminating (?) drive-in patrons, that plot ingredient would have been the only surprise awaiting them.

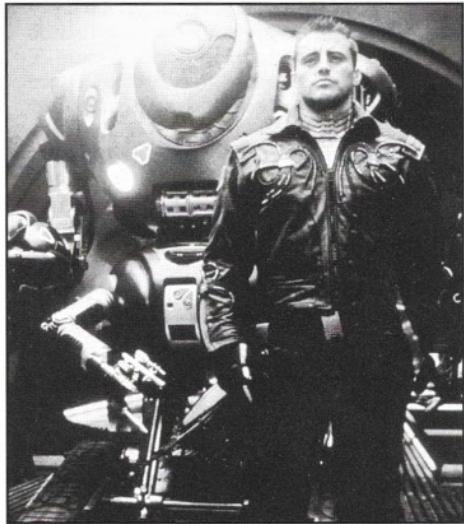
—John F. Black

LOST IN SPACE
Image Entertainment
Four Sides CLV
Laserdisc, \$39.95

Built on the premise of "Swiss Family Robinson in Space," Irwin Allen's sixties TV series *LOST IN SPACE* concerned the travails of mankind's first expedition to another star. The Robinson family and their neat little flying saucer, the Jupiter II, were to be the pathfinders for human colonization of Alpha Centauri. But the nefarious Dr. Smith, working for an unnamed foreign power, sabotaged the mission, sending the spacecraft wildly off course. The Jupiter and her crew became hopelessly—say it with me—lost in space.

The show, originally intended to be a sci-fi adventure, soon collapsed into

campy farce to compete with its time-slot rival, *BATMAN*. The dramatic potential of the situation was never explored; the family always seemed to be on a simple camping trip, and Dr. Smith was reassigned from assassin to buffoon. Despite the general silliness of the show, it had



its charm, and it has generated an avid fan base over the last 30 years. A film was often discussed but never made until now.

The characters and basic plot of the old series, through the first few episodes, are intact in the movie. But the innocent sixties theme of plain ol' space exploration for its own sake had to be replaced with a nineties imperative—the polluted Earth will be uninhabitable in a few decades, so we must disband to another world. The film opens with a flashy, noisy, preposterous space battle just to get our attention and introduce us to fighter pilot Major Don West (Matt LeBlanc), a hyper-macho idiot. Once that needless bit of fireworks ends, we meet the Robinsons, who are preparing for their launch into history.

Space Family Robinson has been updated to Dysfunctional Family Robinson, and it's really quite annoying. Young Will (Jack Johnson) is a scientific genius who longs for his father's attention, but John Robinson (William Hurt) is too busy worrying about the mission. Middle child Penny (Lacey Chabert) is a whiny, squeaky-voiced brat who is too busy mourning the loss of her social life to care about the work at hand. ("This mission sucks!") Daughter Judy (Heather Graham) is a workaholic scientist tweaking every last component of the ship, and Mrs. Robinson (Mimi Rogers) is trying to hold the family together in addition to doing her job. While all this is going on, the evil saboteur Dr. Smith (Gary Oldman) is programming the spacecraft's robot to kill everybody after launch. They get underway, many things explode, and the ship becomes... ya know.

There are a number of homages to the original show, including original robot voice actor Dick Tufeld providing the



speaks in an eastern European accent. Van Helsing suspects that he is confronting the resurrected vampire, but he must trick Dracula into revealing himself. I do wish that Lee's face had been completely blacked out. The viewing audience is able to discern Dracula's unmistakable features, even while Van Helsing remains uncertain. I'd prefer to have been

vocals for the film's great big ugly robot, and an ill-advised "cute" little CG cartoon animal called the "blorp" to replace the equally ill-advised chimp-with-a-hat "bloop" of 30 years ago. The spaceship starts out looking like the TV show's saucer, but after launch it shucks its outer shell to become an ugly shapeless generic sci-fi ship. The symbolism is unintentional, but apropos.

The special effects (a record 767!) are excruciatingly detailed and visually stunning. If effects are your criteria for seeing a film, then this is your baby. If you'd like a little meat with your eye candy, you're going to go hungry.

With performers the caliber of Hurt and Rogers onboard, I expected more than I got from this film. Scenes of human interaction are clichéd and contrived and ultimately pointless. While there's a fairly clever twist during a time-warp sequence (we see a horrible vision of the family's possible future), most of the remaining plot is ridiculous and annoying.

I must single out two performances: Oldman plays Smith the way Smith should have always been played: treacherous, murderous, and without conscience, at one point even holding a gun to young Will's head. It can be classed as a standard Gary Oldman performance, but that's a good thing, and in this movie it was the best thing. And then there's Matt LeBlanc. Oh, my God! I can blame a bad script for William Hurt's dull emoting, but for LeBlanc's, well, blank performance, there's no one to blame but LeBlanc. There should be a law passed to confine him to sitcoms.

Members of the original TV cast, including June Lockhart (Maureen), Marta Kristen (Judy), Angela Cartwright (Penny), and Mark Goddard (West), are featured in quick cameos during the film's opening scenes. Bill Mumy and Jonathan Harris (Will and Dr. Smith) preferred to retain their dignity. Goddard is especially good as the crusty general in charge of the mission, and easily turns in the best performance after Oldman's.

This widescreen (2.35:1) special edition laserdisc is chock full of extras, including every trailer and TV spot ad nauseam. The second audio channel carries a discussion by director Stephen Hopkins and writer Akiva Goldsman. Side Four contains five featurettes that are more interesting than the movie. First is a short documentary on the future of actual space exploration. Next is a fascinating behind-the-scenes feature showing how the special effects were accomplished. A collection of deleted scenes shows us how much worse the movie could have been, but is amusing to watch with incomplete effects, notations on screen, hand-animated blorp, and bluescreen backgrounds.

The best part for old fans are the interviews with the original TV cast members, which are great fun and too short. The disc closes with a selection of

outtakes punctuated by Gary Oldman's expletives.

"This mission sucks!"

—John E. Payne

VALENTINO
MGM/UA
Three Sides CLV
Laserdisc, \$39.98

In many respects, Ken Russell's 1977 biopic of Rudolph Valentino is the last (so far) Ken Russell film in the grand manner. Many good films follow it—including his two-part TV film, *CLOUDS OF GLORY* (1978), which is among his very finest work—but *VALENTINO* marks the end of an era for Russell, the last of his glory days as one of the filmmakers of the seventies, a decade he helped define.

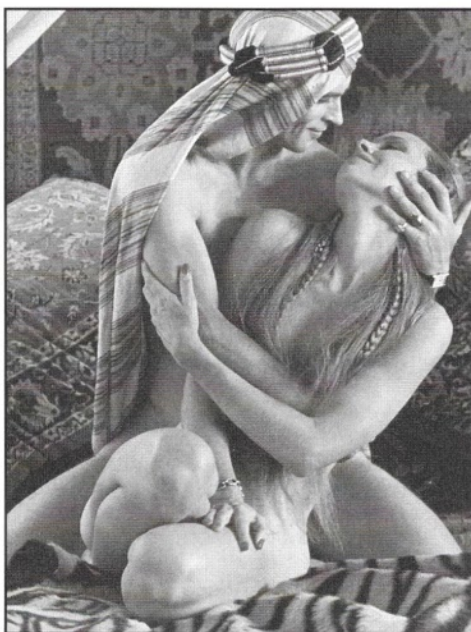
At the time of its release, it seemed something of a disappointment, but this had more to do with it coming directly after the triple whammy of *MAHLER* (1974), *TOMMY* (1975), and *LISZTMANIA* (1975) than with the quality of *VALENTINO* itself. Those three films had been so wildly experimental that they made *VALENTINO* seem too normal. The passage of years makes it much less normal and minimizes its undeniable flaws.

Hard though it may be to realize in light of today's astronomical budgets, *VALENTINO*'s \$5 million budget made it the most expensive film Russell had then made. Every dollar (and what appears to have been much more) appears on the screen. It is a sumptuous film, gorgeously designed by art director Philip Harrison and costumer Shirley Russell, beautifully photographed by Peter Suschitzky, and masterfully directed by Russell. Wonderful use is made of locations that make the film appear even richer than the budget allowed. (The gilded Tower Ballroom in Blackpool, England, for example, does double-duty

as a ballroom in which Valentino and Natasha Rambova perform an exhibition dance to hawk Mineralava Beauty Products and as the hall in which Valentino and a Chicago newspaper reporter hold a boxing match.)

Still, the film was a troubled production. Russell and star Rudolph Nureyev were not an especially good mix. Unlike most of the actors with whom Russell had worked, Nureyev was not predisposed to completely trust the director or his judgment, even to the extent of refusing to shoot one scene because it didn't fit in with his concept of the character. As if this didn't generate enough tension, Russell's 20-year marriage to Shirley Russell was coming apart at the seams, and the strain shows, evidencing itself mostly in the film's somewhat unpleasant misogynistic tone. With the exception of the wonderful Felicity Kendal's performance as June Mathis, all of the women characters in the film are either absolute shrews or figures of fun—or both. This is frequently very funny—especially with Leslie Caron's Nazimova—but the fun seems far more cruel and two-dimensional than would be expected from the director who previously obtained some amazingly multi-leveled performances from Glenda Jackson, Vanessa Redgrave, Twiggy, Dorothy Tutin, Georgina Hale, and Ann-Margret. Later, Russell's second wife, Vivian Jolly, commented that Russell was "miserable" at the time "and made a miserable film." Russell himself has never been especially kind to the film, once even walking out of a showing at a retrospective of his work, muttering, "What idiot made this?" and later commenting that a watered-down TV cut of the film was actually nearer the film he wished he had made. (Ironically, the notorious sequence in which Valentino spends a night in jail, a sequence that Russell had fought to keep in the film against the wishes of producers Robert Chartoff and Irwin Winkler, was one of the things he most approved of being cut!)

From the vantage point of 1999, however, *VALENTINO* takes on new qualities that make it a film to be cherished rather than dismissed. It doesn't all work, but when it does, it is nothing short of breathtaking in its brilliance and daring. And there is so much to admire that the catalogue of its virtues—the funeral parlor sequences, Nazimova's spectacular entrance, the dance-hall scene with Linda Thorson's magnificently overplayed tyrant hostess, Russell's very funny turn as director Rex Ingram shooting *FOUR HORSEMEN OF THE APOCALYPSE*, the "Sheik of Araby" sequence, the climactic boxing match—far outweigh its shortcomings. As the finale of Russell's films in his best Grand Opera tradition, *VALENTINO* is essential viewing for anyone interested in the director—or just in full-blooded filmmaking in general.



After something like a year of delays, VALENTINO has finally made it to laserdisc! In most ways, it was worth the wait. The 1.85:1 matting captures the director's visual intentions far better than the full-screen version did, and the sound is definitely improved, taking full advantage of Russell's pioneering use of Dolby Stereo. The recordings of Ferde Grofe's quirky music that Russell used for much of the film's soundtrack have never sounded so beautifully clear. The inclusion of the film's trailer is also a bonus, not in the least because of the jaw-dropping advertising claim attempting to link VALENTINO to (of all things) ROCKY by virtue of producers Chartoff and Winkler!

—Ken Hanke

BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS

Fox Video

Two Sides CLV

Laserdisc, \$49.95

"The film you are about to see is not a sequel to VALLEY OF THE DOLLS... It does, like VALLEY OF THE DOLLS, deal with the oft-times nightmarish world of show business but in a different time and context."

Inspired by the success of Russ Meyer's low budget/high profit nudie VIXEN (1968), 20th Century Fox decided to dip their toes in the sexploitation genre pool, and gave the bosom meister his first shot at a "big budget" Hollywood production. Meyer schmoozed pal Roger Ebert into penning a script about good girls gone bad, and the result is the outlandishly hedonistic BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS (1970).

As the credits roll, we watch a caped figure run a sword through a man in a Nazi costume, then enter a bedroom to push the barrel of an automatic into a sleeping woman's mouth. The woman awakens and screams, which segues into the wailings of rock diva Kelly MacNamera (Dolly Read), belting out an ear-piercing high note.

Following a smashingly successful Senior Prom gig, all-girl rock 'n' roll power trio The Kelly Affair takes a much-needed break out in the van to spark up a doob. When front girl/guitarist Kelly and manager/boyfriend Harris Allsworth (David Gurian) get a bit too frisky, the band's remaining members, Casey Anderson (Cynthia Myers) and Petronella "Pet" Danforth (Marcia McBroom) decide to split, and go score a couple caps of acid from the principal. Before you know it, Kelly and Harris are heavily engaged not in kooky nooky, but in a rapid-fire montage of mod banter that basically spells out the fact that the band should take off for LA, collect Kelly's share of her rich aunt's inheritance, and try to make the big league. "So we go?" "So go!"

And off we go. One sing-along road trip later, the vanload of hopefuls lands in L.A. ("Where it's at!") They track

down Kelly's aunt, Susan Lake (Phyllis Davis), hard at work, attempting to co-



ordinate the grooviest fashion shoot you've seen all week. Kelly introduces herself to Aunt Susan, who is nothing if not overly friendly and generous. Susan and her suspicious lawyer, Porter Hall (Duncan McLeod), take Kelly to dinner, and after a brief catching-up session, Susan offers Kelly a third of the family's million-dollar inheritance. Susan then suggests they all mosey on over to the home of legendary record producer Ronnie "Z-Man" Barzell (John Lazar), to join his hipper-than-hip party....

And bam!—we're dropped smack-dab into the middle of Z-Man's wild, swingin', debauched shindig, in attendance with everyone who's anything. Overlooking the mayhem, constant catalyst Z-Man observes, "The night is filled with magic. Mark my words, little dove... the night is special." Z-Man is immediately taken with Kelly, and pulls her into the crowd. ("C'mon, babe, I'll show you the dump.") Dragging her through his palace, he points out and introduces her (and us) to our cast of characters: Ashley St. Ives (Edy Williams), the beautiful and predatory porn queen; Roxanne (VIXEN's Erica Gavin), the seductive fashion designer with a taste for young women; Emerson Thorne (Harrison Page), waiter by night, law student by day; and part-time actor Lance Rocke (Michael Blodgett). ("His is a special talent. The golden hair, the bedroom eyes, the firm young body... these are the tools with which he plies his trade. And all are available, for a price.")

Harris, Casey, and Pet arrive, and Harris immediately goes hunting for Kelly, instead finding Ashley St. Ives.

("You're a groovy boy. I'd like to strap you on sometime.") Casey hits the bar, is hit on by Porter, and wanders outside to start boning up on how to become a depressive loaner—but not before capturing Roxanne's attention. Pet (literally) bumps into Emerson Thorne, and chemistry starts a-brewin'. Harris hunts down Kelly, who's currently being wooed by Z-man. Kelly nervously introduces Harris as her "manager," and Z-Man insists the band grace the party with a song. What choice does a poor girl have but to rock the house?

Z-Man is elated with the performance, but the band's name ain't quite right, so he redubs them The Carrie Nations. With Z-Man behind them, their rise to stardom begins—but as everyone knows, the higher you rise, the farther you fall, and as the prologue hints, there's plummeting to be done. Z-Man's planning a private soiree that's destined to take things way way too far, and 'ere the night is through, the "black sperm of vengeance" shall be drunk!

BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE DOLLS isn't the only script Roger Ebert penned for pal Russ Meyer, but it's easily the best. This swingin, hip, groovy flick leaves nothing out. Sex, violence, betrayal, more sex, marriage, greed, and philosophy run rampant with gleeful abandon—and even amid the melodramatic mayhem, endlessly-quotable hipster dialect, plentiful wordplay, and endless psychobabble, we still have time to examine the important social issue of hermaphrodites! Every player performs with over-the-top zeal, particularly Lazar (whose career this film allegedly destroyed), Read, and Blodgett. Definitely a film that either delightfully



amuses or painfully annoys, BTVOVD is not for everyone's taste, but it's so full of simply everything, that there's at least something for everyone. (Fans of ska band Sublime will get particularly giddy on Side A, Chapter 11, 43:06.) "Cool, man! That's really gettin' it together!"

Fox's Special Widescreen Edition presents the film in all its pristine 2.35:1 glory. If you've only seen the old Pan & Scan VHS release, you'll really be seeing this film for the first time. And you'll dig it, you little freak.

—Tony Strauss





Not Your Father's MUMMY

by Drew Sullivan

The film stars Brendan Fraser, fresh from playing the hunky gardener of legendary horror director James Whale in *GODS AND MONSTERS* (1998), as legionnaire Rick O'Connell. Rick is the leader of one of two competing expeditions searching for Hamunaptra, the City of the Dead—where, unbeknownst to all, the decomposing but still living corpse of Imhotep (Arnold Vosloo) awaits the day when it will walk again.

In strong supporting roles are Rachel Weisz (as heroine Evelyn Carnahan, an expert in ancient Egypt), John Hannah (as Jonathan Carnahan, Evelyn's ne-er-do-well brother), Stephen Dunham (as Henderson, leader of the rival expedition), Jonathan Hyde (as the Egyptologist), Kevin J. O'Connor (as Beni, an unscrupulous guide), Erick Avari (as the museum curator), and Oded Fehr (as Ardath Bay, leader of the cult of the Mummy). Moviegoers well versed in mummy lore will doubtless note that in the original *MUMMY*, Im-Ho-Tep passed himself off as one Ardath Bey, after first dumping his wrappings and gaining a small measure of long-lost humanity. Here, the role has been split in two.

It's been a long, hard crawl through the sands of time to the bright oasis of this unexpected success. *THE MUMMY* went through more screenplays than the High Priests of Karnac have tanna leaves before writer/director Stephen Sommers, opting to emphasize adventure over horror, got the green light. Independent production company Alphaville, formed in 1992 by producers Jim Jacks and Sean Daniel, immediately began raising the dead on behalf of Universal.

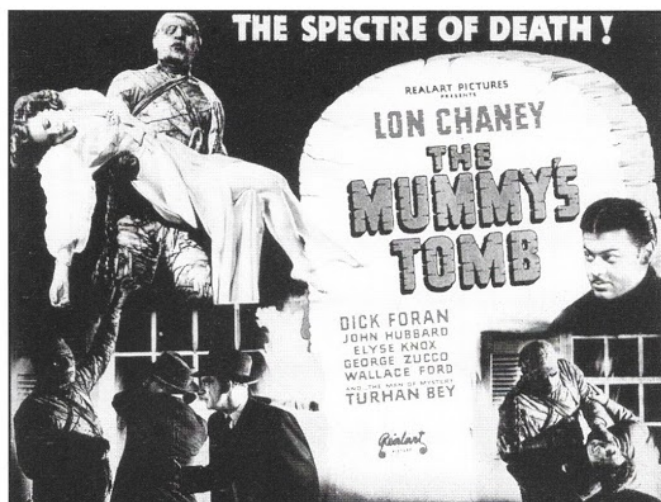
"We had been interested in a new version of *THE MUMMY* for quite a while," says Jacks. "Sean and I started developing the project about six years ago and saw numerous screenplays on the subject. Writers and directors such as Clive Barker, Mick Garris, Joe Dante, John Sayles,

The Mummy's got legs and neither of them has a limp! Universal's semi-remake of its seminal 1932 horror hit *THE MUMMY* is proving to be a surprise smash, already prompting talk of a sequel set in London (*THE MUMMY'S PUB?*) and the long-awaited revival on the shivery silver screen of such classic fiends as Count Dracula, The Wolf Man, The Creature From the Black Lagoon, and Frankenstein's Monster. (The Mad Ghoul and Paula the Ape Woman just don't get any respect . . .) As *Scarlet Street* went to press, the Immortal Egyptian had yet to face his biggest challenge—the May 20th opening of *STAR WARS: THE PHANTOM MENACE*—but he had already broken box-office records for a non-summer weekend opening (44.6 million) and was well on his way to becoming a much-needed hit for the studio.

ABOVE AND BELOW LEFT: Imhotep (Arnold Vosloo), the High Priest of Osiris, Keeper of the Dead, looks a little the worse for wear after being buried alive and munched on by maggots for 3,000 years. **BELOW RIGHT:** Rick O'Connell and Evelyn Carnahan (Brendan Fraser and Rachel Weisz) battle skeletal creatures in an underground necropolis, the fate of the world in their hands and Rick's stomach obviously in his mouth. **PAGE 27 TOP:** Lobby cards from *THE MUMMY'S TOMB* (1942) and *THE MUMMY'S GHOST* (1944), two of Universal's low-budget programming with Lon Chaney Jr. as Kharis. **PAGE 27 BOTTOM:** Im-Ho-Tep (Boris Karloff) goes for a little walk, much to the consternation of Bramwell Fletcher in *THE MUMMY* (1932), one of the true classics of horror cinema.

All THE MUMMY photos © 1999 Universal Studios





George Romero, Alan Ormsby, and Kevin Jarre developed various interpretations of the story.

"As time passed, it became even more imperative to come up with something concrete because one by one other studios were doing new variations of the Universal monsters. For example, Columbia made DRACULA and WOLF, Tri-Star made FRANKENSTEIN, Warner Bros. made a comedy version of THE INVISIBLE MAN. That really left only THE MUMMY and CREATURE FROM THE BLACK LAGOON at Universal that had not been filmed in some recent form."

One can hardly fault Universal for taking a proprietary interest in ghoulies and ghosties, so snugly is studio history entwined with the genre, but the fact remains that the Frankenstein Monster, Dracula, and The Invisible Man did not spring newborn from the depths of the company lot, their origins residing with Mary Shelley, Bram Stoker, and H. G. Wells, respectively. Nor does Universal own the patent on werewolves, though one lycanthrope in particular, Lawrence Stewart Talbot, is theirs and theirs alone. Only the Mummy and the Gillman can trace their family trees directly to Universal, and it's probably only a matter of time before the long-stalled CREATURE remake once more is in the news.

The Mummy has had a long if not exactly glorious screen career, the highlight of which unquestionably is the 1932 film with Karloff. Virtually a remake of DRACULA (1931) with Im-Ho-Tep stepping out for the cadaverous bloodsucker, THE MUMMY improved on its predecessor in every area. Unlike the other Universal monsters, the Egyptian Mystic never made a return appearance, but in 1940 there was a new corpse on the block: Kharis, played by Tom Tyler in THE MUMMY'S HAND. A superior B picture, HAND inspired three even cheaper sequels, all with Lon Chaney tummy-tucking his way through the role. Following THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1942), THE MUMMY'S GHOST (1944), and THE MUMMY'S CURSE (1944), the crumbling creature once again retired, only to change his name to Klaris and follow the leads of Dracula, The Wolf Man, The Monster, and The Invisible Man by meeting Abbott and Costello in 1955. This proved not only to be Universal's last home-grown mummy movie until the present one, but it marked Bud and Lou's swan song after 15 years at the studio.

In 1959, Hammer Films picked up the property and produced the best film in the subgenre since THE MUMMY'S HAND—which, despite being called THE MUMMY, this British production most closely resembled. Christopher Lee played Kharis, displaying skills in pantomime that proved considerably superior to Tyler and Chaney's. Hammer followed THE MUMMY with the clever THE CURSE OF THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1964) and the underrated THE MUMMY'S SHROUD (1967), both

featuring new monsters beat-beat-beating their cloth-wrapped feet, and BLOOD FROM THE MUMMY'S TOMB (1972), which featured a reincarnated queen (no, not Clifton Webb) and no mummy at all. (The film was based on Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of Seven Stars*, written in 1912 and also the basis for the 1980 film THE AWAKENING.) There have been other mummies over the years, but none so famous as those from Hammer and Universal.

Of the latest MUMMY, star Brendan Fraser says: "It harkens back to the monster movies of Universal lore; the Boris Karloff films, in particular. [He means "film," of course.—Ed.] The screenplay borrows all the names and all the characters that were made popular in the whole series of mummy films. [It doesn't.—Ed.] The situations are similar [They . . . aw, the hell with it.—Ed.], but, most importantly, we have been able to embellish and extrapolate the best of what made the mummy films so delightfully spooky and couple that with very sophisticated, computer-generated technology."

Actually, "computer-generated" is becoming a dirty word much faster than anyone could have possibly imagined, especially when it's coupled with the words "special effects." Nostalgia is already running high for effects done "the hard way." "Where have you gone, Ray Harryhausen?" is the watchcry heard 'cross the land.

That said, THE MUMMY seems to have much more going for it than behind-the-scenes computer geeks, and the fact that many fans have found the effects to be unbelievable and cheesy may oddly work in the film's favor. The new MUMMY may not be your father's MUMMY, but

if the effects look a trifle tacky, if they look like they belong in a B picture on the bottom of a double bill—well, then, kids, we can go home again!





Under a New Light Werewolf of London

by Ken Hanke

Universal's first werewolf film has never been as appreciated as the other horror films produced under the Laemmle regime at the studio. The lack of Bela Lugosi or Boris Karloff or even Claude Rains certainly has something to do with this, and there is an inherent resentment among Karloff-philers that the studio was so obviously trying to groom Henry Hull as a kind of cut-rate Karloff. Moreover, the film's director, Stuart Walker, has never been sufficiently studied for anyone to much bother approaching the film as of interest due to its creator. The sad thing about this is that WEREWOLF OF LONDON is probably the best werewolf film ever made, and both it and Walker deserve another look.

Stuart Walker didn't make very many films during his brief career as a director (1931-1935), and only THE EAGLE AND THE HAWK (1933), GREAT EXPECTA-

TIONS (1934), THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD (1935), and WEREWOLF OF LONDON (1935) are at all known today. Yet those four films would indicate a filmmaker of some note. Alas, Walker's bid for a position in film history was set back untold years by Mitchell Leisen's remarks in David Chierichetti's book *Hollywood Director* (Photoventures Press, 1995), first published in the early seventies. Leisen put forth the claim that not only was THE EAGLE AND THE HAWK (on which he was assistant director) really his film and not Walker's, but that Walker was completely incompetent as a director. Walker had been dead 30 years and so could not respond. What Leisen did not explain in his remarks is how Walker, the incompetent he bailed out, was able to make GREAT EXPECTATIONS, THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD, and WEREWOLF OF LONDON without his help, while similarly ignoring the stylistic similarity of THE EAGLE AND THE HAWK with those subsequent films.

Of even greater interest is why Leisen never made a symbolist work such as THE EAGLE AND THE HAWK again. Perhaps Leisen—whose work really doesn't need boosting at someone else's expense—was tired of being looked down on as a makeshift Lubitsch and, was secure in the knowledge that no one was going to accuse him of being a makeshift Stuart Walker! Who can say? To anyone familiar with what is avail-

ble today of Stuart Walker's work, Leisen's remarks do far more damage to him than Walker.

If there is a single unifying factor to be found in Walker's work, it is his penchant for symbolism. In fact, had he made more than a handful of films and were they better known, Walker might well be recognized as one of the handful of truly great symbolist filmmakers. Only one factor stands in the way of him at least flirting with that position—his seriousness. Unlike such masters of symbolism as James Whale and Rouben Mamoulian, Walker never leavens his approach with the humor necessary to make it approachable or likable. He never winks at the audience to put them at their ease. Even in *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, where, operating on the if-it-worked-once-it-will-work-again theory, the studio foisted a pair of ersatz Whale comic Cockneys on him, he handles the material with a deadly earnestness. (In so doing, he also creates something a little uncomfortable and occasionally slightly sickening.)

Despite his overt seriousness, Walker deserves considerable praise for the seamless manner in which his symbolism is married to the narrative of his film. It is entirely possible to view *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* as a straight thriller, overlooking the symbolic implications, simply because those implications are so firmly interwoven into its overall fabric.

Time and again, *WEREWOLF* is decried (frequently by historians who ought to know better) as ineffective due to the casting of "unsympathetic" Henry Hull in the title role. If what one is expecting is a simple horror show, completely devoid of any other values, this is entirely understandable. Hull does not begin to compete on the sentimental level of Lon Chaney Jr. The two approaches in acting are markedly different, but a comparison is not inapt since it reveals a central difference in the two films and their respective aims. Chaney's Lawrence Talbot (undoubtedly, the most monumentally morbid creation ever to earn a series of films) is a great, hulking "everyman," who starts out with virtually no ideas at all, is then trapped in a situation he cannot understand, and ultimately finds himself mired in a futile world from which the only escape is death. Hull's Dr. Wilfrid Glendon is quite another matter. Here we have an intelligent, somewhat cold seeker-after-truth, a man of science and logic, who finds himself drawn into a situation that is foreign to his beliefs—a situation that shakes those beliefs to their very base. Since Talbot is so close to a primitive from the outset, there is not the same level of conflict and duality present.

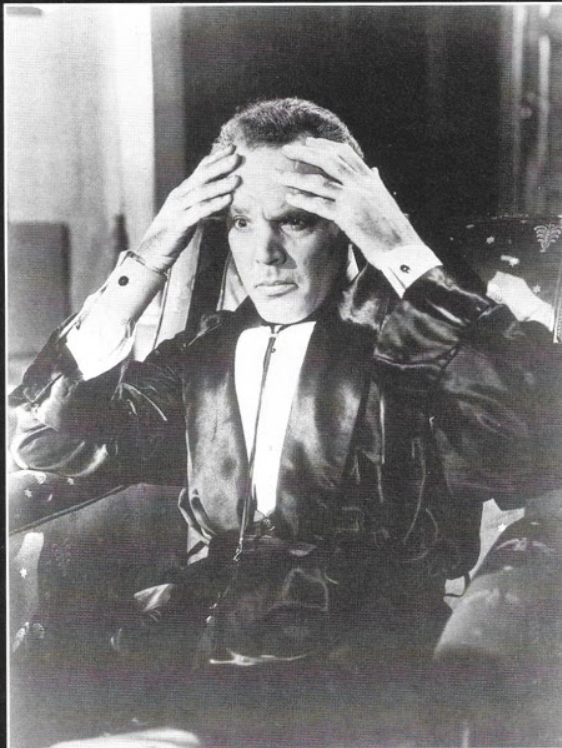
It is significant that Talbot comes upon his affliction simply by trying to be a "nice guy" in rescuing a girl, where Glendon does so by ignoring the "superstitions of others" in his search for the truth of science. Where Talbot is sympathetic, Glendon is fascinating. The inner conflict of a man of reason who knows werewolves do not exist having to come to terms with the irrational truth by becoming one himself is far more complex than the relatively simple process of convincing an unpolished young man with no convictions that he has been bitten and will become a werewolf. Beyond this, not only is there a greater conflict at work in *WEREWOLF*, but there is the added impetus of

this befalling a man who has heretofore literally controlled nature.

Instead of objecting to the fact that Hull is not Chaney, it might be better to rethink why this is not so. Pure physical appeal has little to do with sympathy, though this has frequently been used as the reason for Hull's lack of it. Even were that the cause, he is certainly more pleasant looking here than as Magwitch in Walker's *GREAT EXPECTATIONS*, where he is sympathetic. With this in mind, and looking at *WEREWOLF* as something other than a dry run for *THE WOLF MAN* (1941), it is obvious that Hull's Glendon is not supposed to be sympathetic in the traditional sense. This may make the film more cerebral than might be wished, but it also shows the fallacy of criticizing a thing not for what it is, but for what it is not.

The second major charge leveled against *WEREWOLF*

OF LONDON concerns the film's makeup and its transformation scenes. For some reason, many critics make excuses for the makeup on the basis that it is not as complicated as Chaney's, which simply means that it isn't as hairy. One school of thought works on the untenable assumption that Hull balked at the idea of being subjected to the tender ministrations of Jack Pierce for eight hours or better. To be sure, no one but a masochist would actively want that, but there is no reason to believe that Hull had anything like the power necessary to have vetoed the ordeal had it been wished on him. The real answer lies in the film itself, where it is very clearly put forth that "the werewolf is neither man, nor wolf, but a Satanic creature with the worst qualities of both." On that score, the makeup more than succeeds. It is Satanic. This is also supported by the assertion of Spring Byington's character, following an abortive attack—"The devil's been here!" No one would ever mistake Lon Chaney's werewolf for the devil. Henry Hull's



Henry Hull as Wilfred Glendon—*Werewolf!*

is rather a different skein of yak hair.

The transformations from man to wolf are another point. The standard complaint that the first transformation is achieved by the "simple" method of having Hull walk behind something only to reemerge with more makeup sounds reasonable at first. However, there are two problems, which relate to the misunderstanding of Walker's use of symbolism. In the first place, the very fact that this transformation is detailed in an elaborate tracking shot, requiring much care and preparation (and post-production optical work) to appear a continuous movement when it is not one, explodes any notion that it is simple. Walker has a reason for the presentation—it is firmly tied to the film's symbolism. Miss that and the reason for the approach is gone. (The notion that the expertise to accomplish a before-our-eyes change was not available is arrant nonsense, especially in light of just such a transformation taking place later in the film!)

Placing *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* alongside *THE WOLF MAN* illustrates the shift in approach between the Universal of the Laemmles and the "New" Universal. *WEREWOLF* does not cheat on its thrills. *THE WOLF MAN* takes 15 minutes just to set up an atmosphere that its predecessor establishes in half a dozen lines of dialogue. *WEREWOLF*'s screenplay is compact and to the point. *THE*



WOLF MAN rambles along. WEREWOLF uses a relatively "unimportant" cast (only Warner Oland, on loan from Fox and taking a break from Charlie Chan, is a major star) to good effect. THE WOLF MAN casts Bela Lugosi, Warren William, Claude Rains, and Ralph Bellamy, gives them virtually nothing to do, and turns the bulk of the film over to Chaney's self-pity and Maria Ouspenskaya's cryptic sayings. Perhaps the most telling difference of all, however, is the change from the Werewolf as a clever, calculating, diabolical creature to The Wolf Man as a simple killing machine (much as with the Monster in the post-Whale Frankenstein).

Another plus factor for WEREWOLF is probably more attributable to screenwriter John Colton than to anyone else, though, without Walker's direction, the contribution would never have been realized. Colton, best known for the play MOTHER GODDAM (considered unfilmable until Josef von Sternberg made it as THE SHANGHAI GESTURE in 1941) and his dramatization of W. Somerset Maugham's "Miss Sadie Thompson" as RAIN, is described in the book Universal Horrors (McFarland, 1990) as a "world-weary homosexual," and this very quality may account for his screenplay's sophisticated and largely sober tone, as well as the film's somewhat bitter view of marriage and a more successful conveyance of male bonding than of romantic love.

A possible influence on Colton may have been an odd one for a horror film. The bulk of the film's action not specifically concerning lycanthropy is practically something out of John Galsworthy. The observation of English society is keenly judged (except when the film veers into the very lower classes), and bears up nicely in comparison with the three final novels in Galsworthy's Forsyte Chronicles: *Maid in Waiting* (1931), *Flowering Wilderness* (1932), and *Over the River* (1933). It is more than mildly probable that WEREWOLF's Lady Forsythe and her son, Colonel Forsythe, were not so named accidentally! Moreover, a central character in Galsworthy is named Wilfrid—a character who comes to a bad ending by something that happens to him in the East (in his case, recanting his Western religious beliefs to save his life). Galsworthy was then popular and, of course, James Whale had filmed his brilliant version of ONE MORE RIVER (*Over the River's* American title) the previous year. It's a bit much to be entirely coincidental.

Moreover, the entire film plays like a horror story as written by Galsworthy (if such a thing can be imagined). The relationships and blood ties of the characters are certainly complex enough to qualify, and the characters' handling of a werewolf in their midst is not markedly different from the way in which Galsworthy's characters

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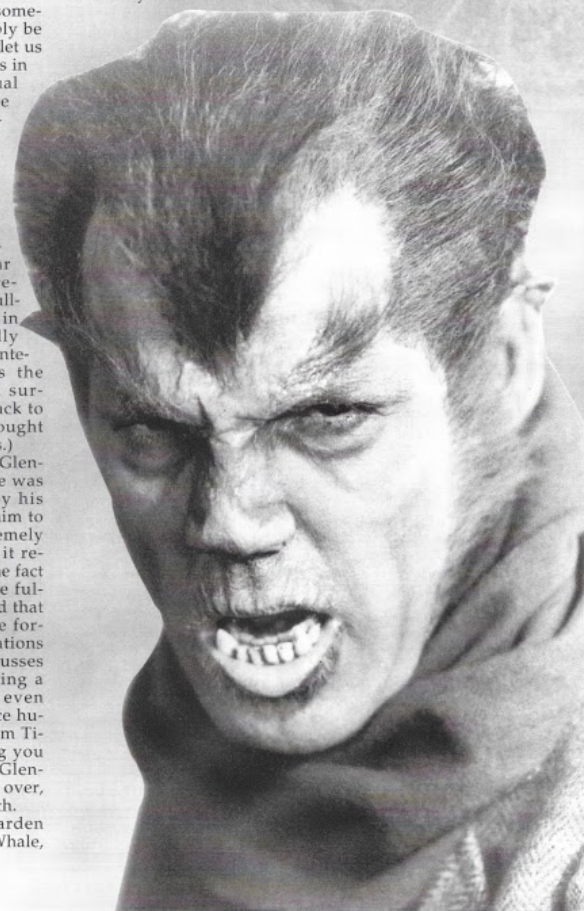
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WOLF MAN rambles along. WEREWOLF uses a relatively "unimportant" cast (only Warner Oland, on loan from Fox and taking a break from Charlie Chan, is a major star) to good effect. THE WOLF MAN casts Bela Lugosi, Warren William, Claude Rains, and Ralph Bellamy, gives them virtually nothing to do, and turns the bulk of the film over to Chaney's self-pity and Maria Ouspenskaya's cryptic sayings. Perhaps the most telling difference of all, however, is the change from the Werewolf as a clever, calculating, diabolical creature to The Wolf Man as a simple killing machine (much as with the Monster in the post-Whale Frankenssteins).

Another plus factor for WEREWOLF is probably more attributable to screenwriter John Colton than to anyone else, though, without Walker's direction, the contribution would never have been realized. Colton, best known for the play MOTHER GODDAM (considered unfilmable until Josef von Sternberg made it as THE SHANGHAI GESTURE in 1941) and his dramatization of W. Somerset Maugham's "Miss Sadie Thompson" as RAIN, is described in the book Universal Horrors (McFarland, 1990) as a "world-weary homosexual," and this very quality may account for his screenplay's sophisticated and largely sober tone, as well as the film's somewhat bitter view of marriage and a more successful conveyance of male bonding than of romantic love.

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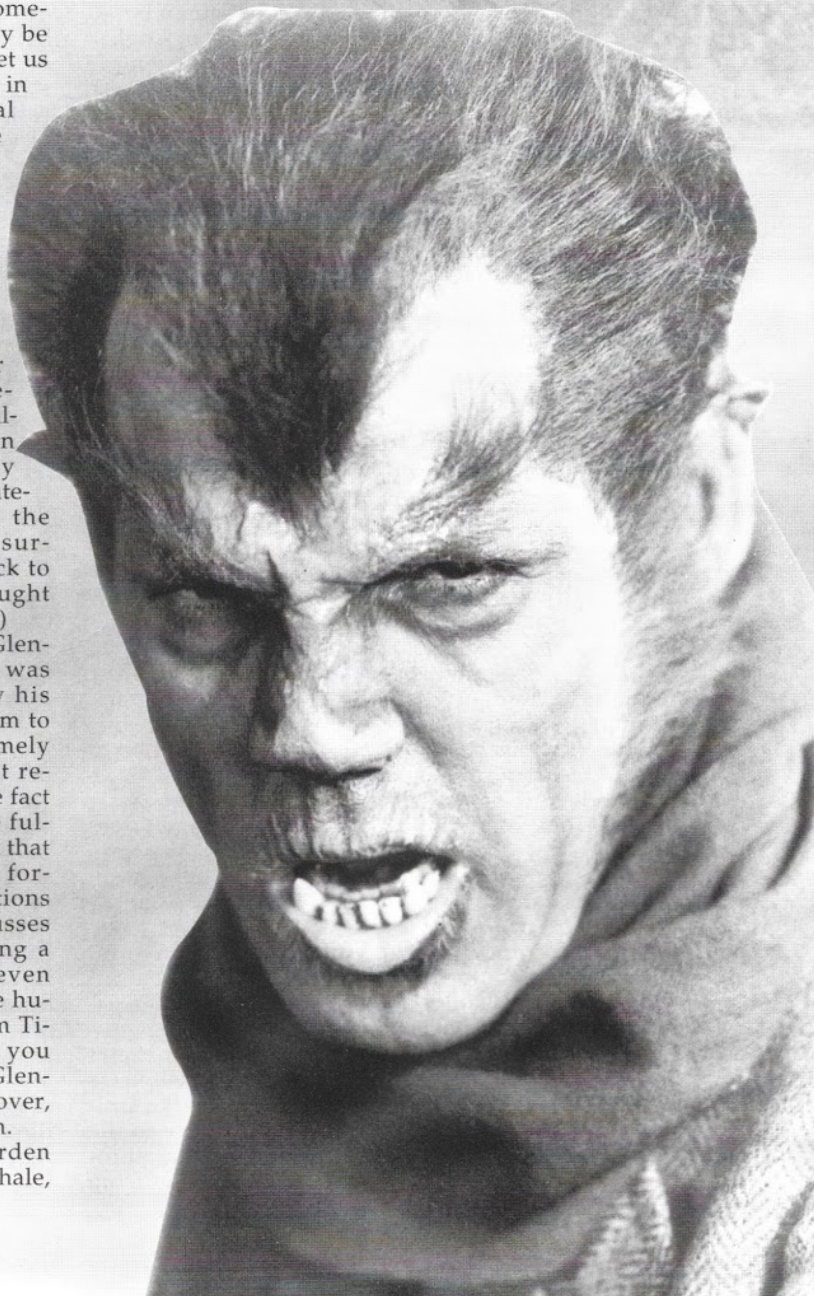
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Another fully explored aspect of these scenes is the aforementioned detailing of the very fact that Glendon has uprooted these plants and unceremoniously incarcerated them in England, something brought home by the Marifasa, but also by a Venus fly-trap, and an esoteric monstrosity referred to as "that horrible Madagascar plant" by Aunt Ettie. It is this last that leads to the introduction of Dr. Yogami. One very proper onlooker comments, on seeing the plant devour a frog, "Frightful! Bringing a beastly thing like that into Christian England!" His statement does not go unnoticed by Yogami, who remarks, "Nature is very tolerant, sir. She has no creed." (The man's subsequent "Quite so" rather neatly sums up his Empirical attitude of "What can you expect from a foreigner?")

Seizing the opportunity of his passing by, Yogami fastens onto Glendon, engaging him in small talk, until Glendon pointedly asks him if they've met before. "In Tibet, once, but only for a moment—in the dark," is Yogami's cryptic reply. Walker's handling of the encounter is exemplary, revealing a keen visual sense and a passion for moving camera that is subtly unlike any other in the Universal horror films. There is a remarkable balance to the shots and some fairly untypical (for the period) use of focus shifts. The shot in which Glendon walks away from

Yogami into another room is uniquely achieved. The camera pulls back with Glendon walking into the room until he, advancing at a rate greater than the camera is receding, arrives in close shot and thinks twice about Yogami's strange reference to their prior meeting. As he turns to call to Yogami, the focus shifts to that person in the background, seen through the French doors. The camera then pans with Yogami as he comes into the room, and moves in on him to close shot as he walks toward Glendon. A tour de force of camerawork by itself, it goes beyond a mere flourish by so accurately capturing the import of Glendon's curiosity and Yogami's eagerness to further their conversation. The approach captures the mood far more gracefully and with greater concentration on performance than any shot breakdown would have done.

When Walker does utilize shot breakdown in the subsequent conversation, he does so with logical effectiveness. When Glendon questions Yogami about their having met before, and Yogami responds that this is so "and unless I am mistaken, we were both on a similar mission," Walker uses a simple two-shot. When the dialogue arrives at Yogami's clarification of this second cryptic statement, he cuts in close on the words "... in obtaining a specimen of the Marifasa Lumino Lupino, the phosphorescent 'wolf flower'" and alternates with a reverse angle close shot on Glendon, giving equal impact to both statement and reaction. Walker only reverts to the two-shot at the point when Glendon loses interest by becoming impatient with Yogami's belief in the necessity of moonlight for the flower to bloom. (Just why the plant has changed from Marifasa Lupino Lumino to Lumino Lupino here is a gaff best left unworried about.)

Walker's handling of the scene may seem textbook simple. Indeed, it is, but very few films are actually cut to this kind of precise logic. All too often, cutting within a scene is completely arbitrary—a dodge to enliven a dialogue scene with frequently pointless shot breakdown. Walker's approach to the cut is straightforward and elemental—the very factors that make it fresh and effective. It has been said, with some justification, that there are a hundred different ways to point a camera, but in reality, only one is correct. Similarly, and with possibly greater import, there are innumerable ways to cut a scene, but only one way to do so for maximum power and effect (within, of course, the precepts of the individual perception of the filmmaker and what he wishes to achieve).

Walker further demonstrates this in his approach to the cutaway from this conversation to that of Lisa and



LEFT: Mrs. Whack and Mrs. Moncaster (Ethel Griffies and Zeffie Tilbury) are friendly rivals whether fighting over a gin bottle or a potential tenant—even if the tenant is a werewolf! RIGHT: Transformed into a snarling beast, Wilfred Glendon (Henry Hull) tries to take a bite out of his wife's erstwhile lover, Paul Ames (Lester Matthews), even though werewolves are supposed to instinctively go after "the thing they love."



Paul. The bulk of the sequence is accomplished in one lengthy, mobile take from mid-length. The duration of the shot serves Walker in much the same way that similar tracking shots would one day serve Preston Sturges, by fusing character and surroundings. Again, costumes come into play. Lisa, in her flowing white dress and with her face framed by a large white garden hat, resembles nothing so much as the hothouse flowers that surround her. She might just as easily be a rare specimen once collected by Glendon, now left to itself, rather than a real and separate human being. As in the Glendon/Yogami encounter, the break in the shot to a closer shot occurs at a change in emotion. When the two are fondly reminiscing about their past, Walker cuts in to a tight two-shot, then just as suddenly reverts to a longer shot when Lisa points out, "There's been no fight in me since the night we broke things off." The shot, like Lisa, becomes more distant as she turns and leaves.

The action moves back to Glendon and Yogami as the latter explains the significance of the rare flower. "This flower is an antidote for what?" Glendon asks incredulously. "Werewolfery," answers Yogami. "Lycanthrophobia is the medical term for the affliction I speak of." (The "medical term" would seem to refer to a fear of werewolfery, not werewolfery itself, but no matter.) Glendon, as might be expected, is more than slightly skeptical of the possibility of a man becoming "a wolf under the influence of the full moon." "No," Yogami corrects him, at which point Walker moves to the first close shot of the scene, underscoring the importance of the statement, "The werewolf is neither man nor wolf, but a Satanic creature with the worst qualities of both." Similar impact is given Glendon's rejection of the concept ("I'm afraid, sir, that I gave up my belief in goblins, witches, personal devils, and werewolves at the age of six") by simply offering a reverse angle close shot of him. His refutation not only establishes his stance on the matter, but produces a similar break to that caused earlier by Yogami for the opposite reason. Walker cuts again to the medium long shot of the first part of the scene for Yogami's matter-of-fact, "But that does not alter the fact that in workaday modern London today, at this very moment, there are two cases of werewolfery known to me." Walker cuts to a tight two-shot as Glendon rises into the frame with Yogami, his interest not completely overridden by his skepticism, "And how did these unfortunate gentlemen contract this... uh... this medieval unpleasantness?" "From the bite of another werewolf," Yogami simply replies, strangely running his hand along Glendon's arm—the spot where he was bitten.

Walker furthers the impact by having Glendon move forward, the camera tilting up to encompass both men in the frame, as Yogami follows him, continuing, "These men are doomed but for this flower, the Marifasa." Walker holds the contemplative moment until they are interrupted by the arrival of Lisa, whereupon the shot again becomes distant. (It is almost an embarrassing moment, as if she has walked in on an intimacy between the two.) "What a strange man," Lisa comments after Yogami leaves, while the clock in the hallway chimes the hour. (Never stressed, the chiming of the clock in WEREWOLF OF LONDON is used at dramatic points in the film, as if to reinforce the inevitability of the progression of events.)

The return of Glendon to the private world of his laboratory makes concrete much in his character that has heretofore been implicit. As we first see him, he is aiming his "artificial moonlight" at a plant, inducing it to bloom. "See, man, see!" he calls to his assistant, Hawkins (J. M. Kerrigan). "That moonvine—that only blooms at night. If I can deceive that vine, surely I can deceive Marifasa!" The key is the repeated concept of deception—a deception that is nothing more nor less than the deception of nature herself, something that Glendon is so accustomed to mastering that it never occurs to him that it might master him. (A similar case can be made regarding his relationship with Lisa—a union that, while not based on deception exactly, is clearly not a natural one.) There is a subtle irony in the fact that, in subsequently deceiving the Marifasa into blooming under his controlled artificial moonlight, he also succeeds in tricking his own arm into reacting to the light, causing it to transform before his eyes into something that shatters his scientific disbelief in Yogami's werewolf notions. (The transformation here, as well as later, more elaborate ones, uses the removal of color filters to reveal already applied makeup for part of the effect, something that Rouben Mamoulian had very secretively done—though it had been used in a simpler form in BEN-HUR (1926)—in DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE at Paramount four years earlier. Mamoulian's secret obviously didn't baffle Universal's effects wizard, John P. Fulton!)

Apart from the effects, the symbolism of Glendon "mastering" nature, and the plot development (Glendon discovers that the spikey blooms of the Marifasa reverse the transformation), the scene is notable for the development of the relationship between Glendon and his lab assistant, Hawkins. It is with Hawkins alone that Glendon truly has a firmly felt human relationship. There is an obvious warmth between the two men, and more than once



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At first, Glendon is only able to observe his wife and Paul at a distance, as he is trapped by a chatty old lady. ("I simply jitter to go to Java—simply jitter, yes.") Further, in the film's first use of what will become its all-pervasive prison imagery, he is symbolically trapped behind the iron bars surrounding the porch on which he is standing. When Lisa finally introduces Paul to her husband, Ettie Coombs rather pointedly insists on informing Glendon that Paul was once engaged to Lisa. ("When I was six and he was twelve," Lisa all too quickly points out.)

Colton and Walker are wise enough not to let Glendon become utterly humorless and unsympathetic. The approach chosen serves to humanize the character—they give him a dry sense of humor, as he corrects Aunt Ettie that it is a tree and not, as she has misquoted, a daffodil that only God can make, but assuring her when asked that it is "much more so" difficult to make the daffodil.

Another fully explored aspect of these scenes is the aforementioned detailing of the very fact that Glendon has uprooted these plants and unceremoniously incarcerated them in England, something brought home by the Marifasa, but also by a Venus fly-trap, and an esoteric monstrosity referred to as "that horrible Madagascar plant" by Aunt Ettie. It is this last that leads to the introduction of Dr. Yogami. One very proper onlooker comments, on seeing the plant devour a frog, "Frightful! Bringing a beastly thing like that into Christian England!" His statement does not go unnoticed by Yogami, who remarks, "Nature is very tolerant, sir. She has no creed." (The man's subsequent "Quite so" rather neatly sums up his Empirical attitude of "What can you expect from a foreigner?")

Seizing the opportunity of his passing by, Yogami fastens onto Glendon, engaging him in small talk, until Glendon pointedly asks him if they've met before. "In Tibet, once, but only for a moment—in the dark," is Yogami's cryptic reply. Walker's handling of the encounter is exemplary, revealing a keen visual sense and a passion for moving camera that is subtly unlike any other in the Universal horror films. There is a remarkable balance to the shots and some fairly untypical (for the period) use of focus shifts. The shot in which Glendon walks away from

Yogami into another room is uniquely achieved. The camera pulls back with Glendon walking into the room until he, advancing at a rate greater than the camera is receding, arrives in close shot and thinks twice about Yogami's strange reference to their prior meeting. As he turns to call to Yogami, the focus shifts to that person in the background, seen through the French doors. The camera then pans with Yogami as he comes into the room, and moves in on him to close shot as he walks toward Glendon. A tour de force of camerawork by itself, it goes beyond a mere flourish by so accurately capturing the import of Glendon's curiosity and Yogami's eagerness to further their conversation. The approach captures the mood far more gracefully and with greater concentration on performance than any shot breakdown would have done.

When Walker does utilize shot breakdown in the subsequent conversation, he does so with logical effectiveness. When Glendon questions Yogami about their having met before, and Yogami responds that this is so "and unless I am mistaken, we were both on a similar mission," Walker uses a simple two-shot. When the dialogue arrives at Yogami's clarification of this second cryptic statement, he cuts in close on the words "... in obtaining a specimen of the Marifasa Lumino Lupino, the phosphorescent 'wolf flower'" and alternates with a reverse angle close shot on Glendon, giving equal impact to both statement and reaction. Walker only reverts to the two-shot at the point when Glendon loses interest by becoming impatient with Yogami's belief in the necessity of moonlight for the flower to bloom. (Just why the plant has changed from Marifasa Lupino to Lumino here is a gaff best left unworried about.)

Walker's handling of the scene may seem textbook simple. Indeed, it is, but very few films are actually cut to this kind of precise logic. All too often, cutting within a scene is completely arbitrary—a dodge to enliven a dialogue scene with frequently pointless shot breakdown. Walker's approach to the cut is straightforward and elemental—the very factors that make it fresh and effective. It has been said, with some justification, that there are a hundred different ways to point a camera, but in reality, only one is correct. Similarly, and with possibly greater import, there are innumerable ways to cut a scene, but only one way to do so for maximum power and effect (within, of course, the precepts of the individual perception of the filmmaker and what he wishes to achieve).

Walker further demonstrates this in his approach to the cutaway from this conversation to that of Lisa and



LEFT: Mrs. Whack and Mrs. Moncaster (Ethel Griffies and Zeffie Tilbury) are friendly rivals whether fighting over a gin bottle or a potential tenant—even if the tenant is a werewolf! RIGHT: Transformed into a snarling beast, Wilfred Glendon (Henry Hull) tries to take a bite out of his wife's erstwhile lover, Paul Ames (Lester Matthews), even though werewolves are supposed to instinctively go after "the thing they love."

Paul. The bulk of the sequence is accomplished in one lengthy, mobile take from mid-length. The duration of the shot serves Walker in much the same way that similar tracking shots would one day serve Preston Sturges, by fusing character and surroundings. Again, costumes come into play. Lisa, in her flowing white dress and with her face framed by a large white garden hat, resembles nothing so much as the hothouse flowers that surround her. She might just as easily be a rare specimen once collected by Glendon, now left to itself, rather than a real and separate human being. As in the Glendon/Yogami encounter, the break in the shot to a closer shot occurs at a change in emotion. When the two are fondly reminiscing about their past, Walker cuts in to a tight two-shot, then just as suddenly reverts to a longer shot when Lisa points out, "There's been no fight in me since the night we broke things off." The shot, like Lisa, becomes more distant as she turns and leaves.

The action moves back to Glendon and Yogami as the latter explains the significance of the rare flower. "This flower is an antidote for what?" Glendon asks incredulously. "Werewolfery," answers Yogami. "Lycanthrophobia is the medical term for the affliction I speak of." (The "medical term" would seem to refer to a fear of werewolfery, not werewolfery itself, but no matter.) Glendon, as might be expected, is more than slightly skeptical of the possibility of a man becoming "a wolf under the influence of the full moon." "No," Yogami corrects him, at which point Walker moves to the first close shot of the scene, underscoring the importance of the statement, "The werewolf is neither man nor wolf, but a Satanic creature with the worst qualities of both." Similar impact is given Glendon's rejection of the concept ("I'm afraid, sir, that I gave up my belief in goblins, witches, personal devils, and werewolves at the age of six") by simply offering a reverse angle close shot of him. His refutation not only establishes his stance on the matter, but produces a similar break to that caused earlier by Yogami for the opposite reason. Walker cuts again to the medium long shot of the first part of the scene for Yogami's matter-of-fact, "But that does not alter the fact that in workaday modern London today, at this very moment, there are two cases of werewolfery known to me." Walker cuts to a tight two-shot as Glendon rises into the frame with Yogami, his interest not completely overridden by his skepticism, "And how did these unfortunate gentlemen contract this . . . uh . . . this medieval unpleasantness?" "From the bite of another werewolf," Yogami simply replies, strangely running his hand along Glendon's arm—the spot where he was bitten.

Walker furthers the impact by having Glendon move forward, the camera tilting up to encompass both men in the frame, as Yogami follows him, continuing, "These men are doomed but for this flower, the Mariphasa." Walker holds the contemplative moment until they are interrupted by the arrival of Lisa, whereupon the shot again becomes distant. (It is almost an embarrassing moment, as if she has walked in on an intimacy between the two.) "What a strange man," Lisa comments after Yogami leaves, while the clock in the hallway chimes the hour. (Never stressed, the chiming of the clock in *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* is used at dramatic points in the film, as if to reinforce the inevitability of the progression of events.)

The return of Glendon to the private world of his laboratory makes concrete much in his character that has heretofore been implicit. As we first see him, he is aiming his "artificial moonlight" at a plant, inducing it to bloom. "See, man, see!" he calls to his assistant, Hawkins (J. M. Kerrigan). "That moonvine—that only blooms at night. If I can deceive that vine, surely I can deceive Mariphasa!" The key is the repeated concept of deception—a deception that is nothing more nor less than the deception of nature herself, something that Glendon is so accustomed to mastering that it never occurs to him that *it* might master *him*. (A similar case can be made regarding his relationship with Lisa—a union that, while not based on deception exactly, is clearly not a natural one.) There is a subtle irony in the fact that, in subsequently deceiving the Mariphasa into blooming under his controlled artificial moonlight, he also succeeds in tricking his own arm into reacting to the light, causing it to transform before his eyes into something that shatters his scientific disbelief in Yogami's werewolf notions. (The transformation here, as well as later, more elaborate ones, uses the removal of color filters to reveal already applied makeup for part of the effect, something that Rouben Mamoulian had very secretly done—though it had been used in a simpler form in *BEN-HUR* (1926)—in *DR. JEKYLL AND MR. HYDE* at Paramount four years earlier. Mamoulian's secret obviously didn't baffle Universal's effects wizard, John P. Fulton!)

Apart from the effects, the symbolism of Glendon "mastering" nature, and the plot development (Glendon discovers that the spikey blooms of the Mariphasa reverse the transformation), the scene is notable for the development of the relationship between Glendon and his lab assistant, Hawkins. It is with Hawkins alone that Glendon truly has a firmly felt human relationship. There is an obvious warmth between the two men, and more than once

Walker photographs them in the tight two-shot he generally reserves for Paul and Lisa. There appears to be no homosexual undercurrent in this, beyond the implication inherent in any sort of male bonding. Rather, the relationship here has distinct elements of Galsworthy again. It is not uncommon in Galsworthy to encounter such a bond between master and servant, as witness Blore, the butler in the Mont household in *Maid in Waiting*, *Flowering Wilderness*, and *Over the River*. More to the point is the almost identical master/servant relationship between the tragically doomed Wilfrid (!) Desert and his man, Stack, in *Flowering Wilderness* and, to some extent, in *Over the River*.

Continuing in this Galsworthian vein is the next scene, which not only depicts the various social structures within the social structure—in this case, servant to servant—but also imparts a special common-sense knowledge, one his “betters” seem devoid of, to the servant. The first of these is carried quite nicely by the comic interlude between Hawkins and the butler, Plimpton (Joseph North), with each trying to keep the other in his place and both being almost maliciously polite, as Hawkins serves as the buffer between the affairs of the house and his master. More important, though, is the concept that there is something unnatural in Glendon’s experiments being made concrete by Hawkins’ prided observation on artificial moonlight—“But there’s a very scary thought if you come to consider it . . . it don’t leave nothing for heaven to do.”

The following scene—the introduction of Yogami’s second visit to the house—is very nearly tossed off, but it isn’t without its merits, particularly as concerns the character of Ettie Coombs. The scene commences with Aunt Ettie attempting to persuade Lisa to come to her party in London that evening. Her chatter quickly turns from dithery to slightly malicious as she encourages her niece to “forget Wilfrid” and have Paul escort her to the event. For so subordinate a character, Aunt Ettie is a little too deep to be dismissed as either an idiot or a hostile force, though she is undeniably one of the catalysts in the chain of events that drive Lisa away from Glendon. Viewed closely, Aunt Ettie’s actions are less vicious than they are uninhibited and realistic. She obviously knows that Glendon is inattentive. Equally obvious is the fact that she knows Lisa is unhappy in her marriage and that an outing would do her good—and an outing with Paul would do her more good than one with her husband. The point being quickly and smoothly made, the film doesn’t dwell on it, preferring to leave Aunt Ettie’s character somewhat ambiguous. Immediately she’s off on another subject, dithering about her new home. (“Queen Elizabeth slept there one night. It’s right on the river in the midst of the sweetest slums! So individual—murderers’ dens on one side, pubs on the other.”) Her subsequent discourse about a buffet party, where she sat on a plate of salad “and no one told me,” is interrupted by the arrival of Dr. Yogami, whose presence sends Aunt Ettie’s dog into an inexplicable frenzy of yapping. At once she is off on yet another track, forcing herself on “this interesting looking man” (whom she insists

on calling “Dr. Yokohama”) and inviting him to her party, refusing to take a negative answer.

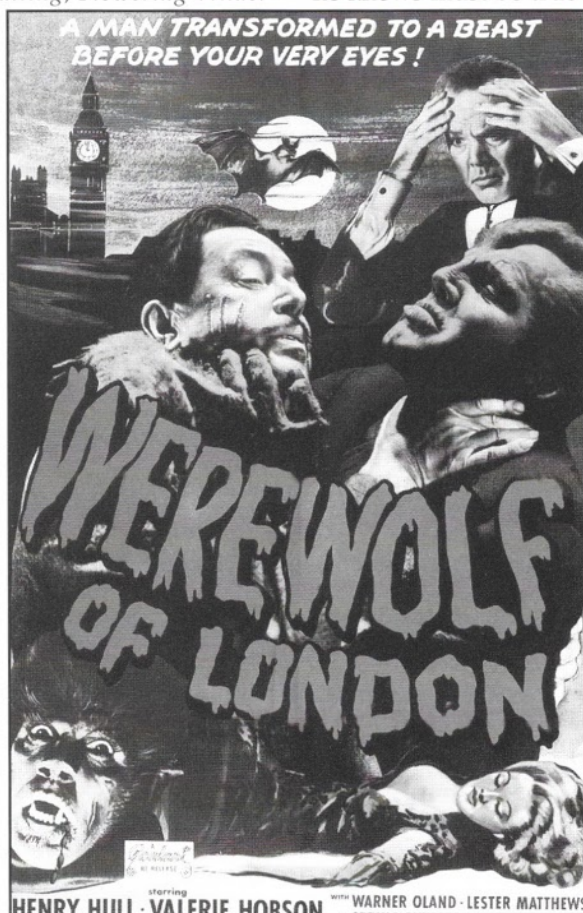
Upon her departure, the clock chimes as Dr. Yogami, against the wishes of Lisa, take it on himself to set out for the laboratory. (This is a key point in the use of the clock. It is in the following encounter between Glendon and Yogami that the former, through his refusal to accept what he knows must be true and his treatment of Yogami, seals

his fate.) At first, he tries to brush Yogami off, telling him to come another day. “Another day,” Yogami points out, “will be too late. What will happen before morning I cannot say. Tonight is the first night of the full moon.” Glendon, unreasonably, but with a consistency of character, dismisses this talk as an old wives’ tale. Yogami sadly informs him, “I would it were an old wives’ tale. Two blossoms of the Mariphasa flower in there would save two souls tonight.” Glendon is shocked to hear this, having thought the plant was a cure and not merely a temporary antidote. Even so—and with an alarmingly cold lack of concern about the other soul in question—Glendon is not to be shaken and ends the conversation.

Unlike other such occasions when a conversation is broken off, Walker does not here immediately revert to a longer shot following his series of over-the-shoulder close shots. Instead, he tracks in slowly on Yogami, who warns, “But remember this, Dr. Glendon, the werewolf instinctively seeks to kill the thing it loves best.” Walker’s decision is a sound one. The conversation, regardless of Glendon’s thoughts on the matter on a conscious and

rational level, is only terminated when Yogami chooses to do so. By utilizing a different approach than heretofore, Walker significantly adds to the already powerful shot of tracking in close on Yogami. Only then does the film revert to the medium-shot approach, whereupon Glendon literally retreats through the insulating doors to his own world of the laboratory.

Much about Walker’s approach to the construction of a film can be learned from contrasting this scene with the one that immediately precedes it. In the first, everything is on a basically social level, even allowing for the development of Aunt Ettie’s character, and as such Walker keeps it at a distance. In the scene between Glendon and Yogami, on the other hand, he emphasizes the importance of the encounter by moving us in closer and closer to the proceedings. In this manner, he carefully establishes an approach that works within the reality of his film. Withholding close shots tells as much as utilizing them—maybe more. The style is in marked contrast, of course, to James Whale, with his penchant for a great many unusually tight close shots. Walker opts for a simpler style—in part, yes, because he is not the artist that Whale is, but mostly because his overall approach to film is not the same as Whale’s. Whale loved and identified with his grotesques and so lavished close shots on them. Walker is more of an observer, preferring to keep his detachment in terms of judgment. Undeniably, Whale’s more completely subjective camera is more sig-



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Bitten on the Keys The Music of *Werewolf of London*

by Richard H. Bush

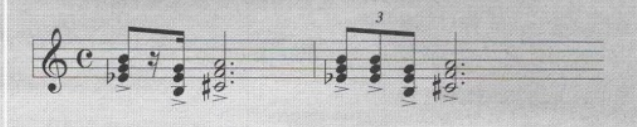
Like many thirties films, *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (1935) uses both original and library music.

The original music was composed by Karl Hajos (pronounced Há-yos). Hajos was born 1889 in Budapest, Hungary (died Hollywood, 1950) and studied at the Academy of Music in Budapest.

From 1928 to 1934, he worked as a staff composer at Paramount. Free-lancing took him to Universal, where he also scored *MANHATTAN MOON* and *CHINATOWN SQUAD* (both 1935). Hajos subsequently worked at Republic composing music for serials before moving to Monogram and PRC.

WEREWOLF OF LONDON opens with a full orchestral variant of the seven-note werewolf motif (Ex. 1). The theme is employed throughout the score in various settings and is used to identify Dr. Glendon in lycanthropic form. Often it is played by muted brass, a device that would be echoed by Hans J. Salter and Frank Skinner in their music for *THE WOLF MAN* (1941).

Ex. 1 - Werewolf Theme



In many cases, the werewolf theme is harmonized in whole tones. Whole tone scales were cultivated by and usually associated with impressionistic composer Claude Debussy, yet there is a long-standing dramatic tradition of using them to convey an unsettled or supernatural feeling.

Films of the thirties often used library music to economize, a practice that continues to this day. *WEREWOLF*'s opening scenes in Tibet were underscored by music originally composed by Heinz Roemheld for the finale of *THE INVISIBLE MAN* (1933). Roemheld (pronounced Rame-held) was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin on May 1, 1901 (died Huntington Beach, California on February 11, 1985). He had studied music here and abroad before finding work arranging and conducting music for silent films. That work brought him to Universal Pictures in late 1929, which launched a long and successful Hollywood career.

THE INVISIBLE MAN music, with its string pizzicati and swirling woodwind runs, integrates perfectly with the *WEREWOLF* Tibetan footage, perhaps because the music in both cases accompanies suspenseful nighttime "outdoors" action.

The sequence in Glendon's London laboratory was scored by Hajos and entitled "Dangerous Flower." It consists of an ascending whole tone chord progression overlaid with an oriental-sounding fragment in diminished minor key (Ex. 2). The combination (sometimes separated) is used a number of times in the score to signify the Mariphasa plant, the mystery of the full moon, or to accompany Glendon's metamorphosis.

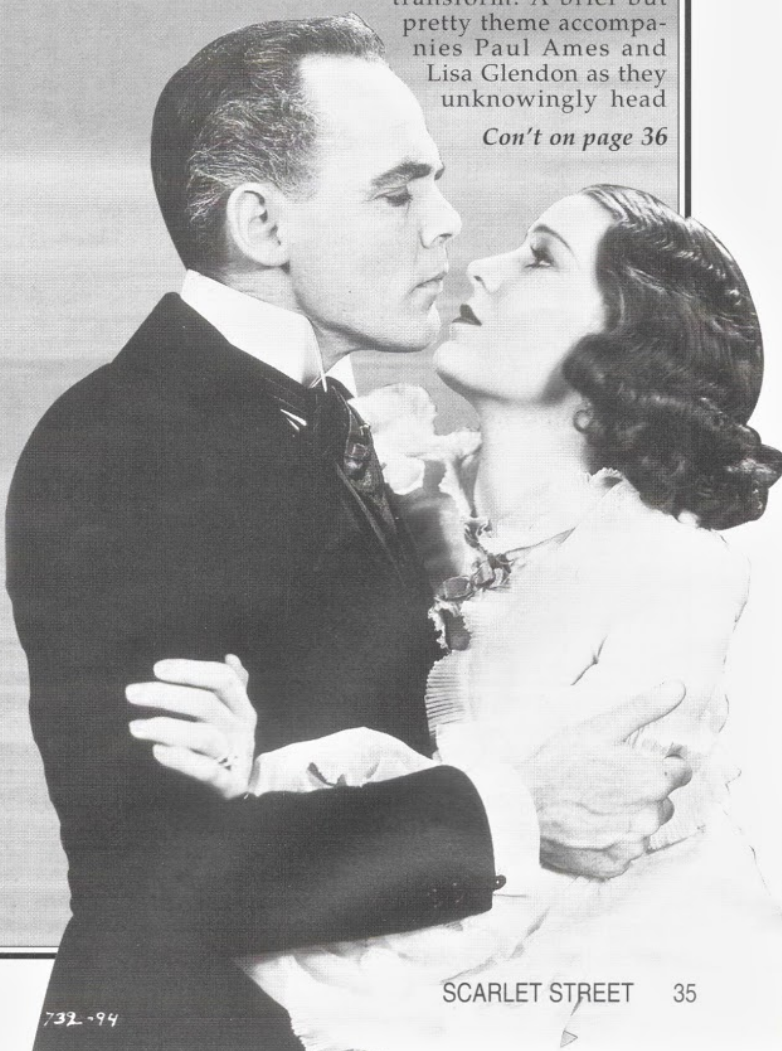
For the scene in which Glendon reads an ancient account of lycanthropy, the "werewolf" theme is heard as a mournful tristamente in the cue entitled "The Old Tale."

The scene immediately following, Glendon's first transformation to werewolf, is accompanied by music originally composed by Heinz Roemheld for *THE BLACK CAT* (1934). The score for this Karloff/Lugosi thriller was the most ambitious musical undertaking for a horror film up to that time. Roemheld's blend of original music and skillfully arranged classics produced a high-powered dramatic score. Ironically, the two Roemheld cues used in *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* are longer than any of Hajos' original cues.

For the scene in which Glendon prays for deliverance, Hajos composed the cue "The Lost Soul," a lovely yet sorrowful melody for cello and oboe counter. The cue abruptly changes gears and builds to a suspenseful crescendo as Glendon undergoes his second transformation and crashes through a window.

Hajos' longest cue for the film is entitled "The Fight." It begins with the "Dangerous Flower" motif, as Glendon lies asleep in a cell at the Monk's Rest and begins to transform. A brief but pretty theme accompanies Paul Ames and Lisa Glendon as they unknowingly head

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BITTEN ON THE KEYS

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toward the tower housing her husband. The music gradually builds to a terrific climax as Glendon, again a beast, leaps from the building to attack them. A furious *agitato* is heard as Paul and the werewolf struggle.

Dr. Yogami and Glendon's struggle in the laboratory is also accompanied by a mixture of library music from *THE INVISIBLE MAN* and *THE BLACK CAT*. The cue from the latter film begins with "*Allegro Appassionato*," originally composed by Roemheld in 1930 and reused in *THE BLACK CAT*.

The final notable Hajos cue is "*Finale*." It begins with a dirgelike statement of the werewolf theme, and then ascends into a triumphant, quasi-religious *maestoso*.

WEREWOLF OF LONDON employed a small orchestra—at most around 30 musicians, including an organist for the final cue. By 1935, Universal generally used original scores for their "A" films and a mixture of tracked library music and original compositions for lesser films, although many of their "B" films used only library music. ("Tracked music" is film industry jargon for the practice of using previously recorded music in a picture instead of original material.) Although the recording of *THE BLACK CAT* used a considerably larger

Ex. 2 - Dangerous Flower



orchestra (about 56 musicians, according to trade paper reports), its sound does not clash with the Hajos material.

There are only about 15 minutes of original music in the film, and a nearly equal amount of track. Hajos' music was reused in dozens of subsequent Universal B productions and serials, as was Roemheld's. Many of the Universal films of the period that combined original and tracked material seem to have been carefully blocked out as to how much original music would be used and where the track would fit. It seems likely that this was a deliberate economy move. Memos at the time to Gilbert Kurland, the sound department executive, compliment him for his cooperation in the "curtailment" program, an attempt to reduce budgets by scaling back music costs, among other means. It should be noted that Kurland was the executive in charge of the sound department and nominal head of the music department, though he was probably not involved in day-to-day music decisions. Paradoxically, until late 1931 Universal's sound department was under the aegis of the music department. That is why many early Universal sound films credit "score and synchronization" rather than separate credits for music direction or sound recording.

In 1931, Universal actually closed its music department and transferred executive responsibility to the head

of the sound department. Through trade paper articles and information on music cue sheets, there is reason to believe that, from 1933 to 1936, the Meyer Synchronizing Service was retained by Universal to assume music supervision for many productions, including *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*. This type of supervision would entail many elements of contracting the music, including hiring the composer and orchestrator, contracting the orchestra musicians, and arranging music clearances.

Very little music manuscript for Universal Pictures survives from the thirties. Universal music librarians apparently fought a losing battle in attempting to preserve the music, at one point supposedly storing it under the cafeteria floor! Finally, around 1960, the order was apparently given to dispose of the music in a landfill at Universal City.

As to recordings, Universal itself supposedly has no comprehensive inventory of its film-holding elements, let alone music optical tracks.

Recently, composer Joseph Marcello arranged a suite of themes from *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*, expanded for full symphonic orchestra, that is faithful to the sound and spirit of the original Hajos score. The suite has been published by Themes and Variations Music, and hopefully fans of the Hajos score will soon hear it performed in concert or on CD.



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UNDER A NEW LIGHT

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nificant and lively—certainly more involving. Walker's objectivity (to the degree that any art can claim that term), on the other hand, has validity, and it keeps *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* first-rate Stuart Walker. That's a far better thing than being second- or third-rate Whale, which a more Whelan approach would have been in Walker's hands.

The film's next scene, or series of scenes, neatly climaxes the first portion of *WEREWOLF*. Beginning with the beautifully structured (and scored) crosscutting between

Glendon and Yogami (presented only by point-of-view camerawork), Walker never lets his invention flag through the first full transformation toward which the film has been building. Glendon, not surprisingly, seeks the answer to his dilemma in a book (a thoroughly pointless exercise, since it only confirms what he already knows), while in subjectively photographed counterpoint, Yogami actively pursues the two open blossoms of the Marifas and removes his rival's only hope of salvation—a sharply ironic comment on the limitations of science and the scientific mind. (One might note a curious bit of werewolf lore that ap-



It's the cat's meow! Dr. Wilfrid Glendon's first transformation from a quiet man of science into a snarling WEREWOLF OF LONDON is one of the most effective in the history of lycanthropic cinema.

pears to be the exclusive province of this film in the text-book definition on the subject—that it is essential that the werewolf kill a human being during the period of transformation or become “permanently afflicted,” an interesting notion of which nothing is made.)

Glendon's study of the book is soon interrupted by Lisa's arrival, whereupon Walker reverts to the depersonalized medium long shots marking most encounters between husband and wife. At once Walker stages a telling composition in long shot of Glendon and Lisa on either side of the frame, with Paul placed soundly between them. Walker does cut in closer (but not too close) when Lisa makes a move to have Glendon join them, and the display of affection pulls down a little of his reserve, but the sequence quickly distances itself again, not even allowing more than a fairly remote medium shot when Glendon rushes across the room to tell Lisa good-bye and take her in his arms.

Here, in this scene, it is apparent why Henry Hull is the perfect actor for the role, and not miscast as is so often claimed. Within the text of the film, it is essential that Glendon be completely inept and clumsy in his attempts at affection and tenderness, making the hopelessness of the moment all the more poignant. This very fact places the viewer in the uncomfortable position of understanding a man without really liking him. Everything about Walker's handling of the scene is to this end—the compositions never being really close and the clock prominently in view in the background, relentlessly ticking away. The clock chimes as Lisa goes and Glendon shuts himself in his study.

The buildup to the actual transformation is similarly well-achieved, moving from the coziness of perfect order—Glendon seated in an armchair, with a cat placidly sleeping on a pillow in the foreground—to the chaotic, as the cat suddenly becomes frenzied and vicious before running away. Glendon, constantly checking his hands and face for signs of change, dashes from the room. The futility of his flight is brought home by Walker shooting it through the cagelike bars of the staircase. With the utmost visual/symbolic logic, Walker tracks with Glendon past columns (continuing the prison bar symbolism) to the laboratory. As Glendon passes each column, he is transformed into a werewolf—an effect often dismissed as an easy way out, but one which is far from easy (it combines precise moving camera and process work) and is symbolically apt.

Walker then tracks with Glendon through the greenhouse full of the botanical specimens he has collected to the laboratory itself, where he finds the *Mariphasa* blooms gone. One could make the claim that Hull borrows from Karloff in his use of pathetic hand gestures here, but he makes the moment his own by following it with a sudden change in mood as he becomes fully the werewolf, seeking blood, not pity. (Then, too, an equally strong case could be made that Karloff drew some measure of his performance from Hull in the similarly conceived husband/wife relationship of 1936's *THE INVISIBLE RAY*.) In a somewhat unusual—and even old-fashioned—stylistic move for Walker, he superimposes the image of Lisa and Paul leaving over the medium shot of Glendon as the mood shifts from the still-human hope for salvation to the bestial desire to “kill the thing it loves best.”

Cunningly, the film cuts from this to Aunt Ettie's party, where the tone becomes deceptively light as a girl sings “Scenes That Are Brightest” and Ettie busily “shushes” no one in particular. Apparently a little drunk, she sways through her guests (“shushing” all the while) to greet Lady Forsythe (Charlotte Granville), Colonel Forsythe (Lawrence Grant), Lisa, Paul, and Dr. Yogami, all of whom are coming down the stairs to join the party. After embroiling herself in some blather with Lady Forsythe, she introduces Yogami to Colonel Forsythe. Both realize that they have met somewhere before.

The film briefly cuts away to Glendon skulking through the streets (and a ludicrously theatrical skulk it is, with his cape pulled up across his face as he creeps along—an odd false note in a film without many such) before returning to the party to find Aunt Ettie and Yogami out on the balcony. Colton's dialogue here is wonderfully constructed, as Aunt Ettie prattles on about a variety of topics from moonlight to peacefulness to the romance of the Thames, and neatly tops off the poetic babble with the information, “That's the worst district in London over there—knife you for a shilling.” As usual, all is not dither with her. Her romanticism is quickly shot out from underneath itself by that burst of fact and is even bettered by her own attitude about it, as she says something a bit disturbing and, in the context, profound to Yogami—“I always say everything is fate. Don't you agree with me?” The statement has an obvious effect on Yogami, the only character who does not take Aunt Ettie at face value, but before he

can respond, her statement is punctuated by a howl piercing the night. "What's that?" she inquires in a suddenly terrified tone. "A lost soul, perhaps," he tells her—an answer that scarcely does anything to calm her!

Following another brief cutaway to Glendon skulking (less risibly this time), we return to Aunt Ettie, who has become very nearly hysterical ("I get so nervous! I get so nervous!") and is quickly diagnosed as having been mixing her drinks and bundled off to bed. The scene builds to a fine pitch of terror. Once she is left alone upstairs, Glendon arrives at the house and seeks entry through the slightly opened doors on her balcony. Walker cuts to a close shot of his hands wrapping around the bars of the railing outside her room, then reverses to a close shot of Glendon through those bars as he proceeds to climb up. The next shot is subjective, as the werewolf climbs onto the balcony, opens the doors, and enters Aunt Ettie's room. This is an intriguing and effective use of subjective camera, since it also shows his looming shadow over her bed, achieving two effects at once. Moreover, the shot is particularly disconcerting when, in a move similar to one in Carl Theodor Dreyer's *VAMPYR* (1932), it becomes an objective shot within the same take as the shadow becomes unconnected with the point of view. The shadow causes Aunt Ettie to wake and, in one of the most genuinely evil-looking images from the era, Walker shows Glendon moving toward the camera in a slightly distorted close shot. Aunt Ettie's screams frighten off her attacker and alarm the guests downstairs, who rush to her aid.

"The devil's been here!" she quickly announces to her rescuers. "He had green eyes! He clawed at me! He was covered with hair!" Her statements are, of course, dismissed as a bad dream induced by overindulgence in intoxicants. The script carefully allows a moment of relaxation, as Aunt Ettie slides into something more like her usual prattle, "My wicked worldiness has caught up with me at last! The Babu of Garoka always said it would!"

The scene switches to Glendon's successful attack on a girl in the streets. Less elaborate by far than the abortive attack on Aunt Ettie, the scene is not without its shock. We don't expect to see much in the way of visual horror or brutality in a film of this period. Neither, however, are we quite expecting the horrible snapping/gagging sound that accompanies the offscreen action as Glendon catches up with his victim. It is one of those deft chills that is all the more effective for being left to the imagination of the spectator.

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can respond, her statement is punctuated by a howl piercing the night. "What's that?" she inquires in a suddenly terrified tone. "A lost soul, perhaps," he tells her—an answer that scarcely does anything to calm her!

Following another brief cutaway to Glendon skulking (less risibly this time), we return to Aunt Ettie, who has become very nearly hysterical ("I get so nervous! I get so nervous!") and is quickly diagnosed as having been mixing her drinks and bundled off to bed. The scene builds to a fine pitch of terror. Once she is left alone upstairs, Glendon arrives at the house and seeks entry through the slightly opened doors on her balcony. Walker cuts to a close shot of his hands wrapping around the bars of the railing outside her room, then reverses to a close shot of Glendon through those bars as he proceeds to climb up. The next shot is subjective, as the werewolf climbs onto the balcony, opens the doors, and enters Aunt Ettie's room. This is an intriguing and effective use of subjective camera, since it also shows his looming shadow over her bed, achieving two effects at once. Moreover, the shot is particularly disconcerting when, in a move similar to one in Carl Theodor Dreyer's *VAMPYR* (1932), it becomes an objective shot within the same take as the shadow becomes unconnected with the point of view. The shadow causes Aunt Ettie to wake and, in one of the most genuinely evil-looking images from the era, Walker shows Glendon moving toward the camera in a slightly distorted close shot. Aunt Ettie's screams frighten off her attacker and alarm the guests downstairs, who rush to her aid.

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Three Little Werewolves! WEREWOLF OF LONDON (1935) passed up the opportunity for a first in Universal horror lore when Dr. Yogami (Warner Oland) didn't turn into a beast during his climactic battle with fellow lycanthrope Dr. Wilfrid Glendon (Henry Hull). It would have been the first Battle of the Monsters! RIGHT: The makeup worn by Lon Chaney Jr. in THE WOLF MAN (1941) was designed by Jack Pierce for WEREWOLF OF LONDON, but was discarded for a simpler (and some say more effective) approach.

of a letdown following this impeccable sequence, though the scene is actually better than the earlier ones. There is a nicely underplayed comic bit with a bottle of gin and a truly frightening image of Glendon glimpsed through the keyhole (lifted from the later Monk's Rest sequence). Still, it is thoroughly superfluous as anything other than a more-clever-than-good link to Yogami's contrapuntal decision to inform the police of the situation, opposing the Moncaster/Whack decision not to say a word.

Following two linking scenes, Yogami has his interview with Colonel Forsythe and Paul. Walker handles it in a very neat manner, beginning by having us almost literally sit in on the conversation—his camera perceptibly lowering as Paul, Forsythe, and Yogami are seated, conveying the sense that we, too, are doing just that. Forsythe, who has had similar dealings with Yogami in the past, it seems, does not take his werewolf stories very seriously, but listens politely at first. Walker keeps his distance until Yogami tells Forsythe, "You must seize the only specimen of the Mariphasa plant in England," which he reveals to be in Glendon's laboratory. The cut to the close shot is significant, because we now understand Yogami's motive for coming to Scotland Yard in the first place—he is himself fresh out of blossoms. Forsythe dismisses Yogami's testimony as "a very interesting folk tale." Walker reverts to a longer shot as Yogami stands, proclaiming, "I warn you, sir, unless you secure this plant . . ." Walker then cuts to an extreme close shot of Yogami. ". . . and discover the secret of nurturing it in this country, there'll be an epidemic that will turn London into a shambles" (This is an intriguing notion that is left dangling, but which might have made for a sequel had WEREWOLF OF LONDON been the commercial success necessary for such an elaborate and obviously costly follow-up.) The film returns to the long shot while Forsythe tries to bluff an explanation concerning the escaped wolf from the zoo, even though Paul points out that the wolf escaped only the previous night. "That wolf," Forsythe announces, standing up into close shot, "will be captured." "But the murder in Goose Lane," Paul, in an identical shot and movement, reminds him, "was two nights ago." Walker cuts to a close shot of Yogami, who notes, "Do not worry about the animal from the zoo. Whether you catch it or not will not matter much . . . tonight." During Yogami's final proclamation, Walker cuts to Paul as he had also done earlier in the scene. Paul, unlike his uncle (with whom Yogami is never intercut), obviously believes what is being said.

Glendon arrives at the laboratory only to discover that the Mariphasa still hasn't bloomed. Desperately, he tells Hawkins that he's afraid "it's no use." "It'll only need another night," offers Hawkins by way of comfort. Walker cuts to a close shot of Glendon, horror stricken, saying, "Another night?" and then tracks in even closer as Glendon's mind races through the (superimposed) newspaper headlines on into the possible future—"Mrs. Wilfrid Glendon Killed by Monster." Again, the relationship with Hawkins is brought into play. Noticing the reaction of his master, he hopefully suggests that they might speed up the process—"At least we can try." Glendon obviously appreciates this dogged loyalty ("You never fail me, do you, Hawkins?"), but realizes the futility of his situation and leaves the laboratory. It is a telling image as he passes through the doors to the outside world. The laboratory is sanctuary no longer.

Glendon tries to seek a different sort of sanctuary by motoring to Falden Abbey, his wife's ancestral home, where it is his intention, despite the protestations of the caretaker (Reginald Barlow), to stay the night in the house's "monk's rest." After some argument about it not being fit for habitation, Glendon says, "Nevertheless, that's where I'm going to spend the night," adding, "You see, Miss Lisa and I, we miss the old times, too." It is the single most poignant and painful line given to Glendon, and placed within the context extends beyond the person to embrace an ideal of life that is just as much a thing of the past as his marriage to Lisa. The subsequent sequences keep this tone, but introduce one glaring flaw in the logic of the film's own mythology. Glendon's insistence on being locked in the monk's rest—a literal prison to which he confines himself in an attempt to do the same to his inner beast—neatly sidesteps the concept that the werewolf must kill at least one person per night or become "permanently afflicted." (This, of course, may be the result of pruning the script or even post-production changes, though it seems unlikely in light of the smoothness of the narrative.)

Lisa and Paul have rather unfortunately picked this night to have a look at the abbey. In a series of intercut scenes, Walker, with the aid of Colton's screenplay, establishes a perfect blend of suspense and symbol. Colton's dialogue for Lisa and Paul nicely parallels (in a far more civilized manner) that of the zoo watchman and his girlfriend—only here, of course, it is Paul who is trying to lure Lisa away from her marriage. Their romantic scenes

Continued on page 43

With Plenty of Money and Hugh WereWolf of London's Shocking Subtext!

by Richard Valley

"The flower is also the key signifier of the homoerotic male couple's lycanthropy in WEREWOLF OF LONDON: the incredibly rare bloom . . . is the only thing that can keep the two men from acting upon their bestial urges."

—Harry M. Benshoff,
Monsters in the Closet

*"Oh, baby, what I wouldn't do
With plenty of money and you . . ."*

THE GOLDDIGGERS OF 1937

When Harry M. Benshoff's *Monsters in the Closet* (Manchester University Press) was published in 1997, it was met with much opposition from horror fans unaccustomed to examining their beloved genre with an open mind and a fresh approach. Part of the problem, of course, was that diehard fans assumed Benshoff and similar critics were arguing that these films had to be seen in the manner suggested. Not so. As ace genre writer Ken Hanke has pointed out, "The film remains the same and the subtext can be read or ignored depending on the desires, inclinations, and perceptions of the viewer."

In other words, it is not written in stone that Dr. Septimus Pretorius (Ernest Thesiger) has a leech for Henry Frankenstein (Colin Clive) in *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1935), even though he clearly wants to have a "child" with his former student. It doesn't necessarily follow that Old Ygor (Bela Lugosi) harbors an "unnatural" love for the unnatural Monster (Boris Karloff) in *SON OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1939) simply because the big cuss "does things for me." And we mustn't assume that the Devil Doctor (Karloff again) in *THE MASK OF FU MANCHU* (1932) covets the hunky young hero (Charles Starrett), even though he kidnaps him, dresses him in a diaper, watches gleefully as his daughter (Myrna Loy) whips him, and fingerpaints all over the man's bare chest—without the paint.

Well, maybe we'd better assume that last one . . .

One example is absolutely irrefutable, though, to the point that it has, previous to this writing, never been broached, for fear that it would agitate fright fans accustomed to greeting any denial of gay subtext as "a refreshing dismissal" and lead to the collapse of the genre altogether. (Such a thing is rumored to have happened in connection with Westerns and Randolph Scott.) I refer, of course, to the plain and manifest fact that Hugh Renwick is Dr. Wilfrid Glendon's boy toy.

Who's Hugh, you ask, somewhat moronically? Hugh Renwick (played by Clark Williams, who also appeared in Universal's 1934 *SECRET OF THE CHATEAU*)

is the twentyish, good-looking society boy who accompanies Glendon (Henry Hull) to Tibet in search of the *Mariphasa lupino lumino*, a "moon flower." Although Glendon tries to explain away his chum's presence to a passing priest (Egon Brecher) by describing him as a botanist, Hugh is more direct. "He's a botanist," he says. "I'm just a nobody he brought along out of kindness."

Such is the worldly wisdom of the holy man, doubtless gleaned during the many hours of isolation spent with his brothers in the monastery, and the discretionary restraints imposed on him by his sacred vows, that he doesn't respond by sniggering and exclaiming, "Yeah, right!" right on the spot.

Why has Glendon dragged his posy-impaired pal all the way to Tibet? Might a hint be found in one of Dor-

othy Parker's classic wise-cracks? ("You can lead a horticulture, but you can't make her think.") Might it be that, under the guise of a mutual interest in florification (always a sign!), Glendon and Renwick are *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*'s unacknowledged nosegays? For all the blooms in his vast London greenhouse, might Hugh be Wilfrid's best bud?

The fact that the script for *WEREWOLF* was written by John Colton, described in the book *Universal Horrors* (McFarland, 1990) as "a world-weary homosexual playwright/scenarist" (though no basis for his longitudinal lassitude is revealed), points to an answer,

and that answer is a resounding, "Hey, why not?" Perhaps Colton felt it incumbent upon himself to provide the film with a homosexual ambience, since he could not depend on the director, Stuart Walker, to do so. Thus, Colton not only purloined James Whale's comic grotesques from such pictures as *THE INVISIBLE MAN* (1933) and *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN*, but lifted his frequently disputed gay sensibility, too. (Impressive work, that, for a guy so globally tuckered.)

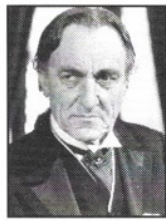
For the most part, *WEREWOLF* is set among the upper crust of the British breadbasket. Everyone seems to have pots of money, but, except for Wilfrid Glendon, no occupation other than spending it. Glendon's wife, Lisa (Valerie Hobson), has a massive country estate that remains barren but for its caretaker and his wife. Aunt Ettie Coombes (Spring Byington) buys apartment buildings on a whim and throws lavish parties stuffed with guests she hardly knows. Sir Thomas Forsythe (Lawrence Grant) runs things at Scotland Yard, but finds time to boogie with the best of them.

In this milieu, Hugh Renwick fills a vital function: he is the stylish gent seemingly without romantic attachments, the socialite summoned to dine by wealthy



Who did Dr. Wilfrid Glendon (Henry Hull) take to Tibet? It had to be Hugh (Clark Williams).

Continued on page 74



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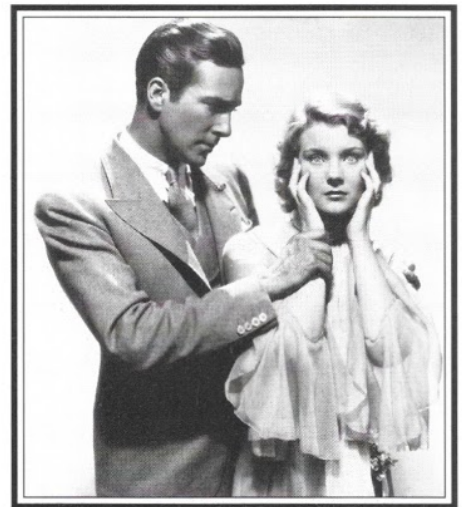
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UNDER A NEW LIGHT

Continued from page 40

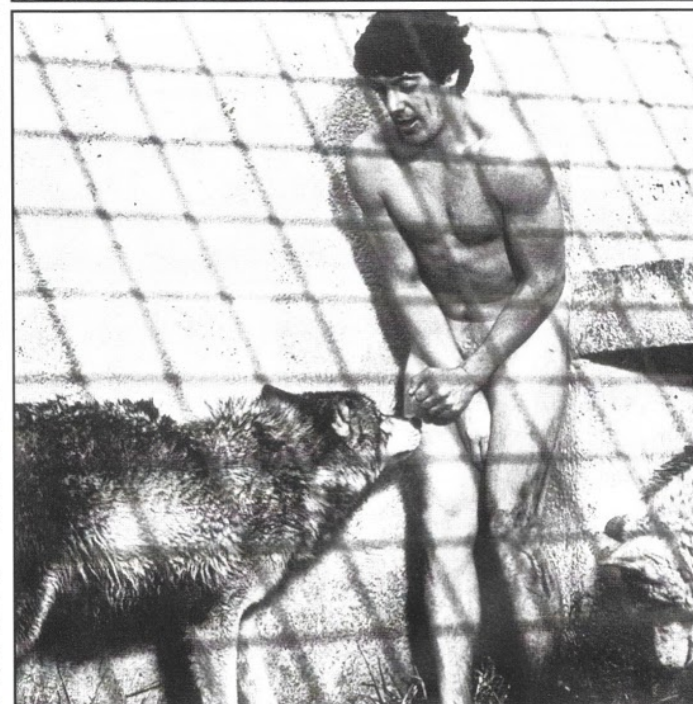
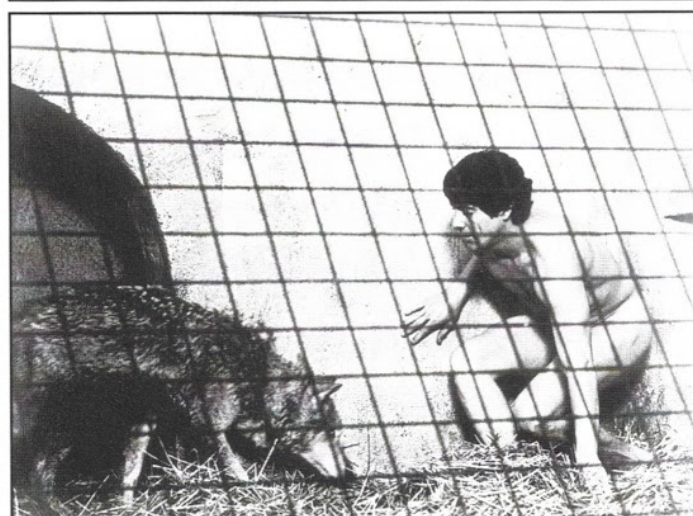
are crosscut with ones of Glendon transforming and waking, until he moves to the barred window and looks down on them in the grounds of the estate. Cunningly structured so that the attack does not occur during a romantic encounter (it comes at a lighter moment, when the pair are indulging in an old game of racing each other to the tower), which would have made their position less sympathetic. Glendon completely gives over to the beast. As he had unleashed the wolf from the zoo, he now rips through the bars of his self-imposed prison and leaps to the attack. Wonderfully and atmospherically staged, Walker fully exploits the symbolism of the bars by cutting to the inside of the room and shooting through them as Glendon makes his jump—the werewolf is unleashed, but Glendon remains imprisoned by his plight.

The attack is effective enough, with Paul distracting and grappling with Glendon just as he's about to lunge at Lisa (Paul is the victor only by clubbing his opponent into unconsciousness with a convenient tree limb), but it is more important in the long run as the setup for the climax. Curiously, the sequence either boasts a continuity gaff, or some small part of it was lost in editing. Up to the point of the clubbing, Paul wears a long leather car coat. Just as he breaks free of Glendon's grasp, he makes a move that might be to remove the hampering garment, which is in any case mysteriously absent one very brief shot later!

At this point, *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* takes on a different, though smoothly integrated, tact. The pace quickens. Lengthy, almost set-piece, scenes give way to a series of brief vignettes, all working as one large texture toward the climax. Considering the scene preceding the shift in tone, this is also extremely logical. In itself, the scene, with its intricate crosscutting, already marked something of a departure from what had gone before. Of equal importance is the fact that Walker has traced Glendon's downfall to its ultimate point. With a genuine attack on his wife (the failure of which, due to losing a fight with his rival, mirrors his loss of her) and the literal breaking out of the beast from behind its bars, the film has reached a stage where it must build to its climax. There is simply nowhere else to go.

Though the scenes are brief, there is nothing sketchy about them, whether it is the very next one, in which Paul informs his uncle, "I fought with Wilfrid Glendon, a werewolf," or the later examination of a fresh murder in Yogami's hotel. There is always more than meets the bare requirements of the plot. In the first instance, for example, there is the rich consistency of the English character—Forsythe can less believe in a werewolf for its own sake than because he cannot possibly conceive of a man of Glendon's social standing being one. There is also an intriguingly unwholesome implication about werewolf habits in the police officer's statement that Yogami's room "smelled like a kennel when we came in." Plot development, however, is at the forefront, and the concern is to convey the fact that Wilfrid Glendon as a werewolf finally cannot be ignored by the dictates of society or common sense, i.e., not only is Yogami somehow connected with Glendon, but the dead *Mariphasa* blossoms in his waste basket are quickly deduced as being from the plant to which Yogami referred.

These scenes are swift and to the point, but the fine montage that Walker follows them with is very nearly breakneck. It is the perfect compression of a great deal of information in a small space. Unlike most montages, it is not a barrage of information all at once. It owes a stylistic debt to the sequence in *THE INVISIBLE MAN* (1933) in which Whale depicts the reactions of radio listeners to the confirmation of the existence of the title character. At the same time, Walker, despite heavy use of a series of



Why do werewolves love to go to the zoo? Henry Hull did so in *WEREWOLF OF LOVE*, but when David Naughton repeated the visit in *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* (1981), he lost both his clothes and his job dancing in Dr. Pepper TV commercials.

Continued on page 71

Forrest J Ackerman's Crimson Chronicles



Well, I can't start off this column with something crimson, but how about the next best thing—and actually it's even more apropos (son of Edgar Allan Poe) for a feature in *Scarlet Street*. How about SCARLET MOON?

My 57th movie cameo! Have I already surpassed Alfred Hitchcock? I'm aiming at 100. Maybe I'll make it into the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the Cameo King.

And the beautiful part about SCARLET MOON is that it's a vampire film. At last Halloween's Chillercon in Secaucus, NJ, I had just completed my second talk to a standing-room-only audience of filmmonster fans interested in hearing my anecdotes of Karloff, Lugosi, Lorre, Fritz Lang, George Pal, Al Adamson, Ib Melchior, Edgar Rice Burroughs, H. G. Wells, et al;—I had just finished my lecture when a young man grabbed hold of

me and waltzed me off to a private room with video equipment. The next thing I knew, I was a vampire leader informing a trembling elderly man, "It's not aliens anymore, it's vampires—and you're about to become one and obey my commands." At least I *think* that's what my dialogue was, or something similar; I'm reporting this weeks after the fact and so much has happened between. I think I can be Forrygiven if my recollection isn't 100% accurate. Anyway, if all went according to schedule, I and you should have been able to check out my cameo in video stores in April. The producer/director, Warren F. Disbrow, wrote me a nice thank you letter in which he turned back the clock two lustrums (a decade) and amusingly reminded me, "I still have that letter you wrote 10 years ago hanging on the wall of my workshop, the one saying, 'I hope I can be in one of

your imagimovies before I'm old enough to play the mummy without makeup!" Shades of Im-ho-tep!

Prince Sirki (Fredric March as Death Incarnate in *DEATH TAKES A HOLIDAY*) has taken actor Robert Young, who starred in the last film directed by Tod (FREAKS) Browning, the mysterious magician movie *MIRACLES FOR SALE*; was charismatically in the gentle fantasy *THE ENCHANTED COTTAGE*; and was involved in the future war scientifilm *MEN MUST FIGHT*.

Total of \$1,500 in rewards! \$500 apiece for information leading to the recovery of the following collectors items (treasures), which have disappeared from my collection. I hope all three can be restored. One: a photoplay edition of *FRANKENSTEIN* with Boris Karloff's signature as the Monster (misspelled Frankenstien!) along with the auto-

graphs of Kenneth Strickfaden and the father of the little drowned Maria, the Daisy that Didn't Float. Two: the book *Bride of Frankenstein*, with a nice jacket of Elsa on the cover and inside a caricature in red ink of her as the bride drawn by herself. (Ron Borst has a smaller book version with a Lanchester caricature that he got from me, so don't think Borst stole the one I'm seeking!) Three: from 1925, a little metallic figure on a thin metal support of the pterodactyl from THE LOST WORLD!

If anyone shows you any of the foregoing or you hear of them being offered for sale or trade, please contact me immediately: Forry Ackerman, 2495 Glendower Ave, Hollywood, CA 90027-1110; phone 323-MOON-FAN; FAX 323-664-5612. I'm brokenhearted that presumably one or more of the 50,000 fans who have passed through my door since 1951 couldn't resist taking my treasures.

It is a virtually forgotten fact that a decade or more before the inauguration of the Hugos, at the third worldcon in 1940 (the Denvention), the first science fiction awards were given. I've forgotten what they were called and why I was given one, but I know I was in the company of Damon Knight, Julie Unger, and possibly artist Roy Hunt when Walt Daugherty called me up to the podium to receive a little medal, kind of like a Purple Heart. My heart was pounding a mile a minute and I was bursting with pride and embarrassment. In retrospect, it almost meant more to me than receiving the first Hugo years later. But "For this, my Mother wrapped me warm," I said with profound gratitude as I was handed the Hugo by Isaac Asimov. Years later, Isaac thrilled me again when I walked thru a door at a New York convention and there he stood, leading all the rest singing, "Forry's a jolly good fellow!" He came forward and kissed me on the forehead. Finally, he was up on the stage with his arm around my shoulder, as a New York audience of fans sang "Happy Birthday" to me on my 75th birthday.

As most everyone knows, METROPOLIS is my favorite scientifilm (which I have seen 90 times). One of the most thrilling moments of my life was to sit on a sofa in her Munich home opposite the robotrix star Brigitte Helm and have her do the sly, lascivious wink that she did with the Master of Metropolis in his office. Another METROPOLIS highlight was to be in Rio de Janeiro at a festival and to see the film as I sat by the side of its creator. Afterward, as Fritz Lang was asked to speak, he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "Anything you want to know about METROPOLIS, ask my friend, Forry Ackerman. He knows more about it than I do!"

I was delighted to play the curator of the last museum on Earth after World War III had destroyed civilization in AF-TERMATH . . . be an imaginary future president of the United States in Universal's AMAZON WOMEN ON THE MOON . . . be the star of a German/American coproduction, the full-length feature MY LOVELY MONSTER.

One of the greatest delights of my life was spending a couple of weeks driving 8,700 miles back and forth across the United States to meet as many as possible of the 1,300 filmonster fans who wrote asking me to come visit them. Had Wendayne not lost her life, we were contemplating repeating our car trek one last time, altho this time being chauffeured rather than doing all the driving ourselves.

I was honored beyond belief to be asked to give the eulogy for George Pal at his funeral.

Altho it did not materialize (because when the Berlin Wall went down the economy went down), it was nevertheless a thrill to be handed a \$100,000 check as a down payment for the purchase of my collection, to be exhibited in a refurbished \$42 million hotel.

I was in a swimming pool with a bunch of strangers, and one mother said



Little Lord Forry-roy

to another, "You wouldn't believe the magazine my kid brought home, full of monsters, and on one page there was a picture of a mummy and the caption said he fell into a swimming pool and became an instant mudpie!" And the whole pool cracked up, and I thought, "Wow, about six weeks ago that came out of my fingers for the first *Famous Monsters of Filmland*!"

It privately pleased me that I was responsible for Robert Heinlein, a good friend and rising SF star at the time, being the Guest of Honor at the Third World Science Fiction Convention. I've been to 54 of the 55 of them and I still think his speech was the best I ever heard. Fortunately, Walt Daugherty recorded it and afterward I transcribed it. Then I stencilled it, mimeo'd it, collated it, stapled it, addressed it, stamped it, mailed it 10 cents a copy—and had the satisfaction perhaps 40 years later of learning a copy had been auctioned for \$1,300, to a dealer!

Proud births: the first time I held in my hands the first issue of *Famous Monsters*. The first *Spacemen*, the first *Vampirella*,

the first *Fancyclopedia*, the first *Lon of 1000 Faces!*, the first *Frankenscience Monster* pocketbook, the first *Ackermanthology*, the first CD Rom box of me and my collection, my coffee table book (decaffeinated, of course) of *Forrest J Ackerman's World of Science Fiction*.

Being flown to a convention in my honor—the Forrycon—in New Zealand.

Singing a duet of "Sonny Boy" with Vincent Price while being driven at 130 kilometers an hour in an automobile in Spain. And being graciously given (and identified as such by him) Vincent's last autograph.

Acquiring a signature of Mary Shelley. Welcomed by his widow at Fritz Lang's private funeral.

Giving the eulogy for SF publisher Leo Margulies.

At Universal Studios, being awarded the first Grimmy on a TV ceremony.

Receiving their lifetime achievement award from the Horror Writers of America.

For the first time in print, in a newspaper in 1949, being called Mr. Science Fiction by Willy Ley.

Being shown Lon Chaney's unmarked secret crypt.

Grasping the marble hand of Jules Verne rising from his tomb in the Amiens cemetery in France.

Being alone in her tiny dressing room with the fantasy female feline of THE CAT PEOPLE, Simone Simon. Receiving a handwritten letter from her, my youthful heartthrob, in 1997 calling me the youngest 80-year-old man she had ever known and including a lip-print kiss across the Atlantic and the years since I first saw her in the early thirties in GIRLS DORMITORY.

Having the October 1926 issue of *Amazing Stories* jump off a newsstand and grab hold of me and shout in my ear, "Take me home, little boy, you will love me."

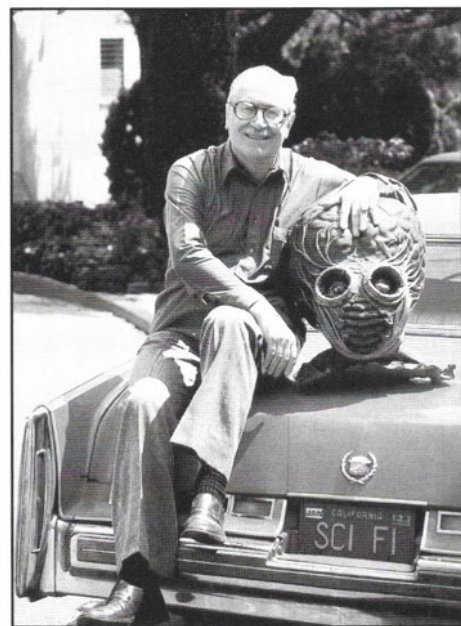
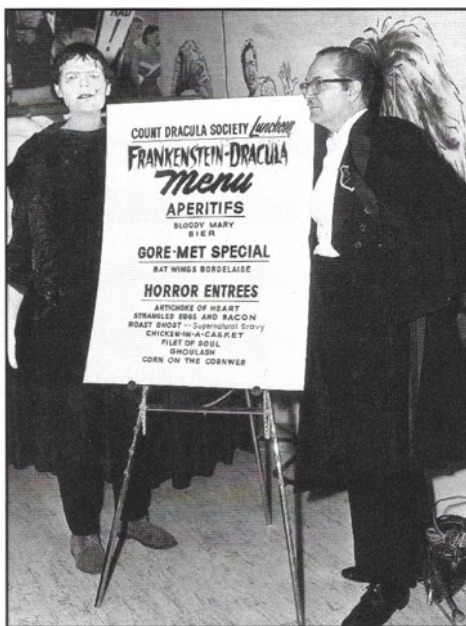
Visiting the legendary Golem graveyard of Rabbi Loew in Prague and later the grave of Paul Wegener, who played the Golem three times. On opening day, seeing the now-lost Wegener scientifilm THE STRANGE CASE OF CAPT. RAMPER. Originally seeing other now-lost Imagimovies, such as THE TERROR, LONDON AFTER MIDNIGHT, MYSTERY OF LIFE, HIGH TREASON, NIGHT OF THE GODS, IT'S GREAT TO BE ALONE (WHEN YOU'RE THE LAST MAN ON EARTH), ONE GLORIOUS DAY, and two that just surfaced, SEVEN FOOTPRINTS TO SATAN and DELUGE.

Doing an impromptu duet with LN-18 (the numeral-named girl of the future in JUST IMAGINE, the late Maureen O'Sullivan) at Tarzan Johnny Weissmuller's 70th birthday.

Beholding the urn with Bram Stoker's ashes.

Acquiring a piece of Skylab that fell in Australia.

In the thirties, acquiring the soundiscs of FRANKENSTEIN (later stolen), MURDERS IN THE RUE MORGUE, THE MUMMY, and Fredric March's DR. JEKYLL & MR. HYDE.



Just like a werewolf, he's Forry all over! Here's the Ackermmonster himself, on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, at a meeting of the Count Dracula Society, and sitting on his car with a new hood ornament. PAGE 47 LEFT: The last photo of Vincent Price and Forrest J Ackerman together. PAGE 47 RIGHT: Striving to prove that he isn't nearly as short as gossips claim, Tom Cruise and his stunt double pose with Uncle Forry on the set of *EYEBALLS WIDE OPEN*.

Frank R. Paul repainting the October 1926 cover that attracted me to *Amazing Stories* and replacing the original character with me.

Meeting Austin Hall, coauthor of *The Blind Spot*.

Replacing Aldous Huxley on a television interview.

Becoming the agent of pioneering SF authors Ray Cummings, Leslie F. Stone, Ed Earl Repp, Otis Adelbert Kline, Charles Willard Diffin, Stanton A. Coblentz, Homer Eon Flint, Stanley Weinbaum, Arthur K. Barnes, Harry Bates, John Scott Campbell, William F. Temple, Clare Winger Harris, John Taine, Ross Rocklynne, P. Schuyler Miller, Raymond F. Jones, Harl Vincent, A. Merritt, et al.

Being gifted of the frontispiece from the first issue of *Miracle, Science & Fantasy Stories* by Elliott Dold Jr.

On the 35th Anniversary of *Amazing Stories*, sitting at the celebration between the two greatest inspirators of my life, Hugo Gernsback and Frank R. Paul.

Being on the Tom Snyder TV *TOMORROW SHOW* with Peter Cushing.

Being with Bela Lugosi two weeks before he died at the premiere of *THE BLACK SLEEP*.

Entertaining Barbara Steele on the floor of my living room in my original Ackermansion, surrounded by a group of her fans, showing her one of her films on TV, which she had not seen.

At half past midnight outside LA's famous downtown theater the Palace, being called from a crowd by director John Landis, who declared, with a reporter from *Life* present, "This is Forry Ackerman, the most important person here," and then introducing me to Michael Jackson and filming me with him in *MICHAEL JACKSON'S THRILLER*.

The Bicentennial Man. It was to have been the Ackermanthology supreme, a hard cover collection of approximately

100,000 words of original science fiction by the deans. Its contributors were to receive \$750 per story upon acceptance of their manuscripts and, upon publication, a unique thousand dollar copy with an inlay of an original color illustration for each author's story by a leading artist. Complementary copies were to be given to the President of the United States, the members of Congress and the Senate, and the White House library on the occasion of the celebration of America's 200th birthday. And I was flattered to be selected by the inspirator of this monumental work, Naomi Gordon-Magaziner, to be its editor. Among those I invited to contribute were Asimov, Bradbury, Bradlet, Farmer, Heinlein, LeGuin, van Vogt, and Williamson. I told each potential author the competition he/she was up against, that I wanted each of them to try to outdo the others, that what I wanted (and for which they were being handsomely recompensed) was a work worthy of a Hugo or Nebula nomination. Isaac was the first one in and he got so enthusiastic about the project that he wrote 15,000 words instead of 7,500, but volunteered to accept payment at the 7,500 level! What a sweetheart! But the fabulous anthology died aborning when the independently wealthy husband who was financing split up with his wife! All I ever got out of it was the satisfaction of seeing Isaac win both the Hugo and the Nebula for "Bicentennial Man," the story he had written for me. In an alternate universe I might have been the Dood Martin Greenberg anthologist of the last quarter century. Now it's to be filmed!

The fun of doing minor ghosting for Catherine Moore, Lon Chaney Jr., AE van Vogt, Ray Bradbury, Ray Harryhausen, Robert Bloch, and Boris Karloff. The Karloff wasn't so minor: it was the Decca record script for *AN EVENING WITH BORIS KARLOFF AND HIS FRIENDS*.

At a tiny dinner table in his home with Robert Bloch across from me, Boris Karloff to my left, and Fritz Lang to my right, I zipped my lips and accentuated my auditory nerves and drank in (yes, I can drink thru my ears) 150 years of reminiscences by those two legendary icons of imagimovies.

Seeing *METROPOLIS* in Berlin in the company of one of the (in his late seventies) "Children of Metropolis."

Viewing Napoleon's tomb with Mr. Sci-fi of France, Georges Gollet.

Finding a Radium Pool (sci-fi story of the same name in early *Science Wonder*) in New Zealand.

Climbing 451 (thanks, Ray Bradbury) feet of the Great Wall of China with James Gunn, Chas. Brown, Elizabeth Hull, and American lady astronaut Lucid.

There were 185 sci-fi folk at the First World Convention; one evening in my home I entertained 186 SF individuals, including Buzz Aldrin.

Living for 41 years (till she lost her life in March 1990 as the aftermath of a mugging in Naples, Italy) with my wife Wendy "Rocket to the Rue Morgue" Ackerman, who translated approximately 150 SF books from French and German, including the Perry Rhodan pocketbook series. Perry Rhodan novel #2000 will be published on the verge of 2000 AD in December 1999, and as the editor of the American translations I will be flown to Germany to be Guest of Honor at the great Rhodancon.

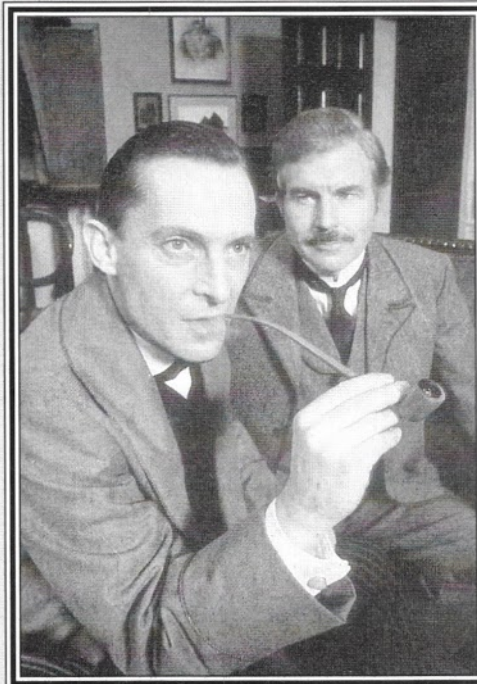
During the Halloween season, I was on TV five times in one night on New York channels. I got a royal welcome at Kevin Clement's fabulous Chillercon and can't thank him enough for his hospitality. I also had the opportunity to once again meet Richard Valley and Tom Amorosi and the rest of the staff of *Scarlet Street* and to assure them I'll keep the

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Crimson Chronicles coming as long as they and you readers want 'em.

I was looking at a movie on TV. I tuned in late, so I don't know the name, but there was a young character who was always quoting famous or obscure lines and her boyfriend would immediately identify them. I wasn't paying that

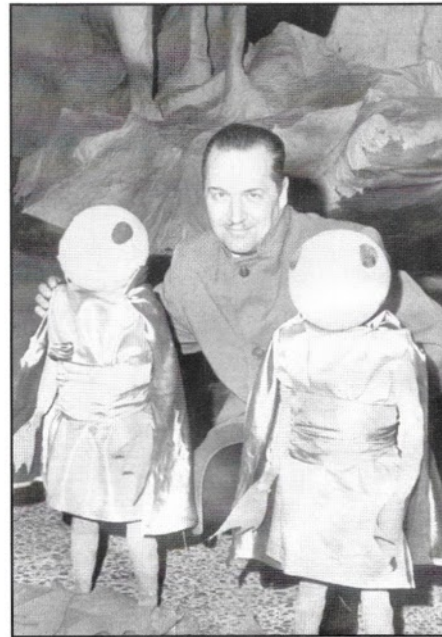
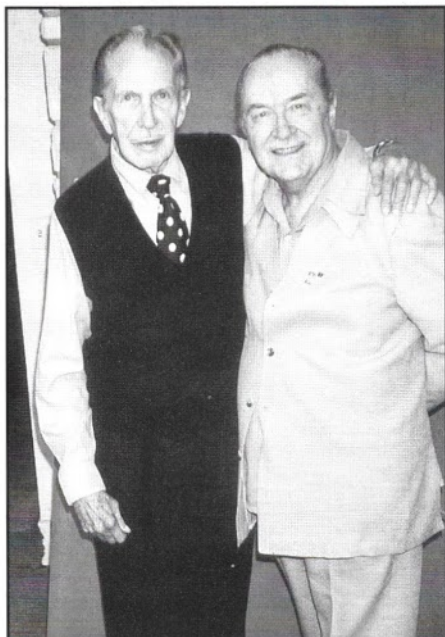
much attention to what she said, but when the boyfriend immediately responded, "DEATH RACE 2000!" it jarred me awake. I was the agent who sold that property and author Ib Melchoir is a good friend and I'd like to tell him about it. Anybody else run into the movie and remember the title?

Recently I woke up at three in the morning and after 15 minutes realized I wasn't going to be able to go back to sleep, so I tuned on the TV . . . and there was the dream girl of my youth, Simone Simon! CAT PEOPLE! Followed by the sequel, CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE! I never in my wildest dreams imagined in 1932, when I stood in the rain to see GIRLS DORMITORY, that I would receive a Christmas card from her in 1998 with a personal handwritten message. She knows my age, but calls me a "young man." She is nearly blind and wrote at the end of her wonderful wishes, "I hope you will excuse the illegible writing, but the (heart symbol) is there." God bless you, dear feline femme fatale, you made my year.

A work in progress: a made-for-TV special about me and the Ackermuseum, its name being a homage to Lon Chaney, The Man of a Thousand Faces: THE MANSION OF A THOUSAND FACES. (You know I'm not two-faced or I'd be wearing the other one.)

Hope you're having a sensational 1999

and I'll be seeing many of you during the year at Chillercon, Monster Bash, Reznahed affair, Summer of Horrors, Dragoncon, Comic Com, Worldcon, the James Warren surprise, and many other *affaires fantastiques*. I'll be seizing you!



A Werewolf Prepares

Nina Foch

interviewed by Danny Savello

Her hobby is work! So reads the official biography of Nina Foch. Born in the Netherlands of a notable Dutch family, she has spent her entire career in the United States, acting in Broadway plays and movies, directing, teaching, and consulting on major motion pictures as she helps moviemakers prepare for filming.

Briefly under contract to Warner Bros., Nina Foch never made it into one of the studio's productions. Signed by Columbia Pictures in the early forties, she finally made her film debut opposite Bela Lugosi in *RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* (1943) and went on to make 17 other features for that studio. Leaving Columbia, she appeared in over 30 additional films for MGM, Paramount, Universal, 20th Century Fox, United Artists—and, at long last, Warners.

Nina Foch graciously agreed to talk to *Scarlet Street* about her astoundingly productive career . . .

Scarlet Street: Acting wasn't originally in the cards for you. You wanted to be a painter at first.

Nina Foch: I was very young; I graduated from high school terribly young and nobody knew what to do with me! (Laughs) I couldn't go to college; they wouldn't take me yet because I was too young! Nobody knew what to do, so I decided I wanted to be a painter. I took courses for about a year and then I realised I was never going to be a great painter—so I became an actress by default! I didn't know what else to do!

SS: You considered being a concert pianist, too, didn't you?

NF: I had given some recitals at Aolean Hall in New York. It's still there, actually.

SS: In 1943, you signed with Columbia Pictures . . .

NF: Yes. I had been with Warner Bros. before that.

SS: What did you do at Warners?

NF: Nothing! (Laughs)





SS: That explains why you signed with Columbia. So *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* was your first screen appearance.

NF: Yes. You see, I came from New York, although I was born in Europe. I lived in Rome and Vienna when I was a little girl, but I really grew up in New York. My agent—he was my agent from the time I was a little kid—he said, “Look, the studios want you, so why don’t you go out to California and grow up on their nickel?” (Laughs) So I went and grew up on their nickel. I don’t think it was really the wisest thing to do, but nobody knew what else to do with me! I didn’t have any deep desire to be an actress. I didn’t for a long time, and then, suddenly, I fell in love with it! I went back to New York on a leave of absence and had a hit on Broadway. I had a good director and he made me realize that I could probably be good and that it was something worth working for. That’s really when I began to think I should take acting more seriously, but I wasn’t that good yet and I made a lot more low-budget pictures. My career is all by default, but now I adore the picture business. I really think it’s exciting. I care about picture making, tremendously. I care about preparation. I’ve become the teacher of directors—a director’s consultant, primarily. You see my name in the credits for films such as *BLOWING AWAY*, and that’s what I love, preparing the picture for the director. That’s my excitement!

SS: That’s a long career journey from *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*, in which you worked with Bela Lugosi.

NF: Bela Lugosi! What I most remember about him is that he drank seltzer water and smelt bad. (Laughs) I shouldn’t really say that. He was nice; he and his wife invited me to dinner and they were very gracious hosts.

SS: How fast was the film made?

NF: Oh, we made pictures in two weeks back then! *RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* was a very low-budget film and done very quickly, but it was still well made.

SS: It must have been difficult for someone just starting out.

NF: Well, I was just a little kid, really, who wanted to please. I came from a

very broken home, a very terrible childhood, and all I wanted to do was please. So I worked very hard and tried to do it right. It wasn’t a very difficult role, by any means.

SS: The film was a success. Columbia even had plans to make a sequel called *BRIDE OF THE VAMPIRE*.

NF: Thank God they didn’t! (Laughs)

SS: Instead, you followed *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* with another horror: *CRY OF THE WEREWOLF*.

NF: I don’t remember that one all too much, really. It just kind of flew by.

SS: In *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*, you were the ingenue, but in *CRY OF THE WEREWOLF* you were the lead.

NF: Yes, I had the Bela Lugosi part! (Laughs) By that time, I had worked myself up to that. They began to rely on me for things, but it was still very much a low-budget picture. They were going to keep me in second-rate things, except that I went to Broadway and had a hit with *JOHN LOVES MARY*. Rodgers and Hammerstein did it; it was quite a big success on Broadway. Prior to *JOHN LOVES MARY*, Hollywood said, “Gee, it’s a pity you’re not prettier, because you can act.”

SS: How charming!

NF: “But unfortunately, you have no sex appeal.” Then they read in the New York newspapers that indeed I was pretty, so when I came back they gave me better pictures. No more vampires and werewolves! I played opposite Glenn Ford and Bill Holden and George Raft.

SS: No more mysteries such as *BOSTON BLACKIE’S RENDEZVOUS* with Chester Morris, or *SHADOWS IN THE NIGHT* with Warner Baxter as the Crime Doctor.

NF: Oh, those! Those were all the B pictures I made in the beginning! In fact, I may have very well made them before I did *CRY OF THE WEREWOLF*.

SS: *SHADOWS IN THE NIGHT* also had George Zucco in the cast . . .

NF: Yes, another man like Bela Lugosi, who made so many horror pictures. He was a nice gentleman, though, a sweet gentleman.

SS: After your success on Broadway, you moved on to such big-budget films as *A*

SONG TO REMEMBER. Did the quality of the role or the production values of your films matter greatly to you?

NF: At the time, I had to do what I was told! Today, of course, it matters. I turn things down—although it’s hard when you get to be my age, because there simply aren’t that many parts. Fortunately, acting is not my only career; my career as a consultant is very lucrative.

SS: In 1945, the same year you made *A SONG TO REMEMBER*, you starred in a smaller-budgeted film that’s a film noir classic: *MY NAME IS JULIA ROSS*.

NF: Oh, that was such a success! When people talk about film, it’s so often mentioned. They show it for university courses, and yet it was also made in two weeks, like *RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE* and the others.

SS: What made it so special?

NF: It was an interesting story, really. And even with the low budget, there was a lot of production value in that one. The camera work was very good, and the direction by Joseph H. Lewis was pretty good. The acting is old-fashioned and creepy if you look at it, now, but it was quite successful.

SS: Did you know you were making something special?

NF: Yes, we knew. We knew, because it had a good script. We all worked our tails off on that picture; we worked like hell because we knew we had something. Usually the stories are so bad, because the studios were only interested in getting the product out. They just handed them out to the distributors, who had to be able to fill a double bill. *RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*, *CRY OF THE WEREWOLF*—these were the second features on a double bill, so the studios just didn’t care. But with *JULIA ROSS*, we all knew that we had something and so we worked like hell! Of course, we also knew we had something several other times, but it didn’t work! (Laughs) Luckily, with *JULIA ROSS* it all came together!

SS: One of your films, *I LOVE A MYSTERY*, was based on a popular radio show.

NF: Yes, it’s interesting. A student that I taught at USC, in the film school, bought



the rights to the I LOVE A MYSTERY radio episodes, and he's trying to sell them again.

SS: Did you act on any radio programs?

NF: I did LUX RADIO THEATER. That was the one we all did, because DeMille was the emcee. They were radio dramatizations of popular movies. I didn't do anything else in radio. I just came out here for the film studios.

SS: And went where you were sent.

NF: After I came back from Broadway, I put my foot down several times. I had a little bit of clout. Even before that, I put my foot down when the script was just too bad, when I didn't think it was profitable to play that part. I hate to say what films, but there are certain types that I just say I read the scripts and I'm not interested. Even my agent—when he calls me up, he says, "I don't think you want to do this thing, really." But, of course, he has to offer them to me and I turn them down.

SS: It must be comfortable to be in a position where you can pick and choose.

NF: Well, I was after I did AMERICAN IN PARIS, too. I started turning things down and I made a lot of mistakes—but I had the principles of an arty New York person. I never really lived here in California. On the whole, I've always been a New Yorker—until 1960, when I decided New York had had it; I no longer liked living there; it had changed so.

SS: I LOVE A MYSTERY also featured George Macready, one of the great Hollywood villains.

NF: Well, he was just a pleasant man. He read his magazine in between shots and we were just good friends, as they say. I never had a social life with these people.

SS: JOHNNY O'CLOCK was another step up from B movies, wasn't it?

NF: Yes, with Dick Powell! His pictures made a fortune! It was an escape from such low-budget pictures as...

SS: ESCAPE IN THE FOG?

NF: That was absolutely appalling! The leading man, William Wright, was drunk from beginning to end! I mean to say, at eight in the morning he was drunk! I spent most of the time going up to the

front office to complain, and they kept saying, "Oh, just get through it! Just finish it!" They printed everything that we could get through. (Laughs)

SS: You made quite a few mysteries.

NF: Well, that's because of the studios; that's what they did. I knew I was in a rut, but what could I do about it? I turned down things that I

thought were horrible—that's when I had to put my foot down—but apart from that there was nothing I could do. I was under contract to Harry Cohn, and that was that.

SS: You stepped up from such leading men as William Wright when you costarred with William Holden and Glenn Ford in THE DARK PAST and UNDERCOVER MAN, respectively.

NF: Bill Holden was a wonderful man! Glenn Ford was, too, of course. I made two pictures with Glenn Ford and two pictures with Bill Holden, actually, but they weren't all at Columbia. Bill and I did EXECUTIVE SUITE at Metro. Now, with Bill Holden, we were friends socially—Bill and his wife and I. I really liked Bill, but he never had any respect for the fact that he was an actor. And I think that's what ruined his life. He never felt that being an actor was a respectable job for a man. But he was a darling, a dear, sweet man. I mean, the description that Shelley Winters gives of him in her book—I don't know that man. I don't even know whether she knew that man! (Laughs)

SS: After that long string of melodramas, how did you get your role in AN AMERICAN IN PARIS?

NF: By that time, I had gone back to Broadway and had a big success in TWELFTH NIGHT. I had also started doing television in 1947. The way I got away with that—I told Harry Cohn I'd split every dollar I got with him. The dollars we were getting in TV in those days were 200 to 500 dollars, which was a great deal more money than it is now! I think that got him. I said, "Look, here I am on Broadway and I really want to do television."

SS: And so, for a cash consideration, he let you. This was live television, wasn't it?

NF: Oh, yes! I loved live! Oh, God, I did so much stuff, just so many studios! I just

couldn't love them more! Naturally, there were problems. They built Television City by hanging the stages separately from steel beams making sure the sides didn't touch so they'd be soundproof. Of course, they forgot to ask the actors what their requirements were—so the side of the building that had offices had lots of bathrooms, but the side that had these soundstages didn't have any! The bathrooms were way the hell and gone! When we did those 90-minute shows on PLAYHOUSE 90, well, we didn't quite make it! (Laughs) There was so much complaining and pissing and moaning that they had to build bathrooms between the stages, so that you could walk into the ladies room on Stage One and walk out the other side of the ladies room onto the next stage. The soundproofing completely disappeared!

SS: That's what pissing and moaning will get you! (Laughs)

NF: The most fun I had was when we broadcast live to New York. I was doing a show in which I didn't appear in the second act and I knew that my then-husband and friends were watching me in New York. So I walked out at the end of Act One, went straight through the bathroom to the next stage and picked up the

Continued on page 52



In 1943, Columbia Pictures decided it was time to get Bela Lugosi back into his vampire cape, the actor not having played an authentic bloodsucker since the film that made him a star, *DRACULA*, had premiered 12 years earlier. Universal Pictures owning the copyright on the Dracula name and character posed little problem for the rival studio who hired Lugosi, the actor who had pretty much set the standard on how the undead should be played. They simply slapped another name on his character: Armand Tesla. The result, *THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*, is not the slice of cheese one might have expected, but a compact, entertaining chiller in its own right. What's more, it's topical (or was, then), a majority of the story taking place outside of London during the Blitz.

It is, in fact, a bomb from a German fighter plane that unleashes the moldy remains of Tesla from a fog-shrouded cemetery. Since *VAMPIRE* was made right in the middle of World War II, there were no qualms about blaming the Nazis for vampirism along with every other crime they'd committed.

The film begins with a prologue set in 1918. Lugosi, aided by Andreas Obry (Matt Willis), a trusty werewolf of the two-legged variety, stalks the land for human nourishment. When he puts the bite on little Nicki Saunders (Shirlee Collier), her grandfather, Dr. Walter Saunders (Gilbert Emery), decides it's time to track down the fiend and drive a spike through his heart. With the aide of asylum head Dr. Jane Ainsley (Frieda Inescort), he finds Tesla sleeping in his coffin and drives home his point.

The narrative jumps 20-some years ahead to war-torn England, where Nicki has grown up into lovely Nina Foch (in her film debut) and Dr. Ainsley is now Lady Jane, proud of her role in the demise of Tesla and prouder still that Nicki intends to marry her son, John (Roland Varno). As bad luck would have it, though, a pair of bumbling civil defense workers (Billy Bevan and Henry DeBecker, injecting a touch of Whalesean humor) come across Tesla's unearthed coffin after a bombing raid and think the spike protruding from the occupant's body has entered the corpse by accident. Or, as one of the men memorably observes, "It's gettin' so it ain't even safe to be dead."

To rectify the act, they carelessly remove the offending instrument, unwittingly releasing Lugosi from his slumber, allowing him to exact his revenge on Lady Jane and her loved ones.

Tesla puts Andreas (now working for Lady Jane, who has shown him the evil of his previous lupine ways) back under his wolfish spell, terrorizes some locals, and poses as a doctor, allowing him to get closer to Lady Jane and her environs. Needless to say, Nicki becomes the object of Tesla's bloodlust, as he plots to suck the life out of her and make her his own. (Surprisingly for a film of the period, Tesla's tastes are varied enough that he takes a nip at John, too, though it's all part of a vague plot to pin the deadly hicky on Nicki.)

While Foch pretty much plays the standard victim role, Inescort does anything but take a backseat, taking charge of the situation, determined to relinquish the pesky vampire for once and for all. It is refreshing to see a woman placed in the role of the crusading vampire hunter and Inescort takes a no-nonsense approach to the part, giving the best performance in the film.



Armand Tesla (Bela Lugosi) cowers beneath the rays of the sun shortly after being hit with a bomb and moments before having a stake driven through his heart by a werewolf. Ever have one of those days . . . ?

THE RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE is fast-paced with atmosphere to spare. The bombed-out church in which Tesla finds his resting place is a grim reminder of the destruction of the war, while director Lew Landers favors the studio fog machine to such a degree that he even has the smoky haze show up indoors (!) in one unforgettable sequence. (Actually, it works!)

Needless to say, there is little to distinguish Lugosi's interpretation of Tesla from his signature role of Count Dracula. Tesla uses the same manner of hypnotic seduction to woo his victims and treats his hairy flunky Andreas in a domineering, ungrateful manner, much as the Count treated poor Renfield. If anything, Tesla is a bit more brusque in his behavior towards others, snapping at a desk clerk (Syd Chatton) to remind him that he doesn't want to be disturbed because he sleeps very late. There is more than a touch of cheeky humor in this moment, as there is in the finale when befuddled Scotland Yard inspector Sir Frederick Fleet (Miles Mander) turns directly to the audience and asks us if we believe in vampires. As long as there are ripe young necks to be had, how could we feel otherwise?

The Return of the Vampire by Barry Monush



PAGE 50: Nina Foch starred opposite George RAFT in *JOHNNY ALLEGRO* (1949), one of the many *noir*, mystery, and gangster films she made during this period in her career. **LEFT TOP:** A stylish still from the mid-forties, when Nina Foch starred in *MY NAME IS JULIA ROSS* (1945). **LEFT BELOW:** The actress was happy to escape the low-budget fare of Columbia Pictures for roles at MGM, including the part of the art patroness in *AN AMERICAN IN PARIS* (1951). The artist, of course, was Gene Kelly.

NF: But such a sweet story! Oh, I really enjoyed live TV, though; I think it's the best training job in the world. The first show I did was with Lillian Gish and Mary Boland. I mean, all kinds of really fascinating people were doing television. I was beginning to get a following, and I also had a name by that time. I got *AN AMERICAN IN PARIS* because I was me! (Laughs) I got the contract straight from the studio; they chose me for that.

SS: What was MGM like compared to Columbia?

NF: Oh, God! Night and day! Columbia was a tacky, shabby little place. They had some great artists, but they weren't treated very well. At Metro, the artist was everything. The craftsmen and artists were treated with respect. In every department, you had extraordinary artisans; they were just wonderful, wonderful people who could do incredible things! You could ask anything of them. I was doing *SCARAMOUCHE* and I suddenly got an idea at seven in the morning that I wanted perfume atomizers. Although I always prepared very well ahead of time, I had suddenly had this idea. So I called up the prop department and by the time I got on the set at nine o'clock, there they were! Of the period! Oh, it was a whole different scene. It was kind of a club, really. We all liked each other and got along.

SS: You worked with Mitchell Leisen on *YOUNG MAN WITH IDEAS*. He was one of Hollywood's top directors in the thirties and forties, but he's all but forgotten today.

NF: Well, he's dead, which is one of the reasons!

SS: Well, yes, but his work . . .

NF: It's very artificial work and the fashion is different, now. Acting has changed so; the acting I was doing in the fifties I can't look at today without cringing, because it's so different from the way we work now. Mitchell Leisen—well, he wasn't much of a director of people. I think he just passed his time. There are styles of working. If you don't move along with the times, you're out of fashion because the style of your work has disappeared. Leisen did all kinds of glossy stuff. Well, that disappeared as actors began to stop playing seven-page scenes with big, exaggerated features. Actors started actually dealing with each other. Television was responsible for that, because you could see the news;

you could see how people actually behaved. It changed everything!

SS: You mentioned *EXECUTIVE SUITE*. In addition to William Holden, you costarred with Barbara Stanwyck. She was considered quite a strong-willed woman.

NF: Well, we didn't play much together, but I knew her and liked her very much. She was very gracious. She wanted to get nominated for an Oscar, but she didn't and I did. And she sent me a very adorable telegram and was absolutely as generous and sweet as could be about it. The saying goes, actresses are more than women and actors are less than men. Actresses become "powerhouses" because they have to; if they survive, that's how they did it. And men who are actors—well, the very act of putting on makeup and worrying about your clothes and always thinking about how you look is going to make you not the usual man. So, we're just different kinds of people. For Barbara Stanwyck to survive, she had to be strong!

SS: From such heavyweights as Stanwyck and Holden, you went on to star opposite Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis in *YOU'RE NEVER TOO YOUNG*.

NF: Oh, God, I don't know why I did that picture! I turned down the things I shouldn't have and did that! I don't know what I was thinking of! (Laughs)

SS: Didn't enjoy the experience?

NF: It was appalling! They liked to be disrespectful to people who came on the set. They thought it was funny to rip the clothes off the producer, pull his tie, tear his hat . . . it's just a whole other world that has nothing to do with me. Oddly enough, though, they were perfectly nice to me.

SS: You were lucky.

NF: Oh, I brought it up to them; I said, "Doesn't it bother you that you're shaming him in front of his people? The producer!" They said, "Oh, we replace his clothes." I just couldn't understand the whole thing. I was stiff and uncomfortable in that picture because I was stiff and uncomfortable!

SS: You appeared in two big Biblical epics: *THE TEN COMMANDMENTS* in 1956, and *SPARTACUS* in 1960.

NF: I made *SPARTACUS* because Kirk Douglas asked for me. We had gone to drama school together; he and I and Betty Bacall were in the same class. We're not the same age, all of us. I mean, when you say school, people think, "My God, she's gotta be as old a Kirk Douglas!" Well, I'm not quite! (Laughs) Anyway, he asked me to do *SPARTACUS* and so I did. It was not a pleasant experience. I did *TEN COMMANDMENTS* because I wanted to experience working with Cecil

stage phone and called my husband. I said, "So how do you like it so far?" He being an actor and director, he yelled, "Get back in there!" (Laughs)

SS: That's funny!

NF: One of the funniest stories—I wasn't there when it happened, but Ilona Massey was doing a show with Basil Rathbone and at the end of the second act she had to take a gun out of a drawer and shoot him. Well, in rehearsal they didn't have the props, so she'd point her index finger and put up her thumb, the way you do to make a fake gun. Of course, when they got on the air, she opened the drawer and, although the gun was there, she was so used to doing it with her finger that she just did it with her finger! (Laughs) And she said, "Bang!"

SS: Poor Mr. Rathbone!

Continued on page 54



A shoestring budget chiller from Columbia Pictures, *CRY OF THE WEREWOLF* (1944) presents Nina Foch in her third film and the first in which she received top billing. The movie was a follow-up to the successful *RETURN OF THE VAMPIRE*, borrowing its ingenue (Foch) and some highly effective music by Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, the latter comparing favorably to the Hans J. Salter/Frank Skinner scores being endlessly recycled at Universal during this period. (Columbia was still using snippets of the *RETURN/CRY* melodies in 1959, when they turned up in *THE WEREWOLF*.)

Set in a decidedly unsouthern New Orleans, *CRY OF THE WEREWOLF*'s main locale is the LaTour Museum, a combination chamber of horrors and exhibition hall of unexplained phenomena. Museum guide Peter Althius (John Abbott) tells his eager customers the story of the mysterious disappearance of the elegant Madame Marie LaTour, who just happened to have been a werewolf! The museum's researcher, Dr. Charles Morris (Fritz Leiber), has done his homework on the whole LaTour mystery, a fact that unnerves the establishment's janitor, Jan Spavero (Ivan Triesault). We know that Jan is trouble because he pops up in unexpected places and has a limp. What's worse; he's from Transylvania!

Jan makes his way to a camp located just outside of town to let his fellow gypsies know of Dr. Morris' meddling. There he meets up with the requisite gypsy crone, Yonka (Maria Ouspenskaya not being available, the filmmakers opted for Blanche Yurka, best known for her unapologetic scene-chewing as Madame Defarge in 1935's *A TALE OF TWO CITIES*) and the tribe's high priestess, Princess Celeste (Nina Foch), who happens to be Marie LaTour's daughter. Celeste has inherited the family's beastly legacy, accepting her fate of transferring into a lupine killer at will, though regretting its interference in her love life. (Several plot points and suspense sequences seem obviously if haphazardly inspired by Val Lewton's 1942 production of *CAT PEOPLE*.) She plans to make Dr. Morris sorry he ever ventured into the family's closet of rather hairy skeletons.

The princess pays a visit to the museum and makes a feast of poor Morris. Then, for good measure, she drives

Peter, the museum guide, bonkers. In one of the movie's creepier moments, Peter is seen emerging from the darkness, a moronic look on his face, muttering for his lost kitty cat. Soon no-nonsense Lt. Barry Lane (Barton MacLane, blustering about as always) is on the case, displaying little tolerance for tales of lycanthropy, regardless of their accuracy.

It is fortunate to have Foch, MacLane, Yurka, and (briefly) Abbott around, because the two romantic leads are less than scintillating. In the role of Dr. Morris' son Bob, we are subjected to a lifeless leading man by the name Stephen Crane. (One assumes this is not the author of *The Red Badge of Courage*, but more likely a studio executive's relative being granted a favor.) As love interest Elsa Chauvet, Osa Massen is certainly more engaging, if only for the fact that the actress, though hailing from Denmark, has the same vocal rhythms as the Austrian-born Arnold Schwarzenegger.

In a sequence effectively demonstrating the film's low dependency on special effects (and its debt to *CAT PEOPLE*), our hero enters the secret passageway that holds the key to the LaTour mystery. In the distance he hears the click-click-click of Foch's heels, indicating that he is being stalked. Suddenly the sound stops, leading gullible Bob to believe the worst is over. Director Henry Levin then cuts to a shot of four wolf paws treading silently across the floor, still in pursuit of its prey. It is a clever moment, negating the need for elaborate transformation scenes that would have cost the production a fortune in fake fur.



Ronald V. Borst/Hollywood Movie Posters

Cry of the Werewolf by Barry Monush

"... the side of the building that had offices had lots of bathrooms, but the side that had these soundstages didn't have any! The bathrooms were way the hell and gone! When we did those 90-minute shows on PLAYHOUSE 90, well, we didn't quite make it!"

A WEREWOLF PREPARES

Continued from page 52

B. DeMille; I wanted to know what that was like. Certainly I shouldn't have done it that year, because I was nominated for an Oscar and my agent was furious. He was right, because it was a mistake.

SS: *And what did you learn about DeMille?*

NF: Well, he knew a lot about filmmaking. He didn't know much about actors at all, but he certainly knew a lot about film making. I learned a lot about discipline and various ways that people should behave, and lots of things about the making of films that I would never have learned from anyone else.

SS: *How would you contrast him and Stanley Kubrick?*

NF: Stanley Kubrick came into SPARTACUS late. He really didn't know what he was doing yet, when I worked with him on that film. He was not prepared, but it wasn't his fault. I don't think he cared that much about actors, though. I'm sure he didn't care about the women too much. Of course, I was taller than he was... (Laughs)

SS: *That put him off, no doubt! You returned to your horror and mystery roots with TV appearances on COLUMBO, KOLCHAK: THE NIGHT STALKER, THE OUTER LIMITS...*

NF: In fact, OUTER LIMITS is the first show my son ever saw me do. I kept him away from the business, but they happened to rerun that show in the late sixties. I was dressing to go out and the television set was on, and he happened to walk into the room. Suddenly he came running into the bathroom; he said, "Mommy! Mommy! Is

that you, Mommy?" at the top of his voice! And indeed it was...

SS: *You played Frannie Halcyon in TALES OF THE CITY. The miniseries ran into considerable controversy over its nudity and language when it first aired. Do you think it went too far?*

NF: To be honest, I really didn't think about it. I didn't look at it with that in mind. I'm not wiggling out; TV is, after all, about going into people's homes. However, there are stations to do more adult material and there are other stations that avoid it. TALES OF THE CITY wasn't on CBS, after all. Probably for CBS or one of the major networks, it would have been incorrect.

SS: *TALES ended with much of its story unresolved. Do you think Frannie was blind to her husband's affair?*

NF: Oh, certainly, yes. She lost him a long time ago! She knows that he doesn't love her anymore. She drinks because it keeps her slightly anesthetized and so she never faces the truth. She's a little bit drunk all the time. I played her as if she started the day drinking. Never heavily, never embarrassingly—but always a little drunk.

SS: *It was a wonderful characterization. You've got a resume from here to tomorrow, an incredible amount of credits. How do you find the time to teach and consult, as well as act?*

NF: Oh, well, I just work all the time! (Laughs) I love to work. I worked this weekend, all weekend. I'm even doing some consulting with someone who's in Switzerland at the moment; so we do it by phone. This morning I was up at six on the phone to Gestadt, talking about an album. I also work with singers. Barry Manilow talks at length about me working with him. He has dedicated a lot of stuff to me, because he seriously feels that I made his act for him. I made him move around well. I love him dearly, we've been working together since 1980. And what else? I teach at the University; I teach two classes a week in directing. And I recently played an alien...

SS: *An alien?*

NF: For an ALIEN NATION television movie. Ken Johnson called and said, "Nina, darling, I wrote this part just for you! You have to do this part! I can think of no one else!" But what he didn't tell me was that I'd have to wear a four-hour makeup, that I'd have to speak in Cantonese...

SS: *So you began as a werewolf and ended up as an alien speaking Cantonese!*

NF: Oh, I haven't ended up yet! I'll still be working!



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Gerald Fried is best known for his music on the television series *Star Trek* (he wrote the classic "Kirk vs. Spock" fight theme) and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*. He wrote some of his most vibrant material for these late '50s and early '60s horror films; among his other genre projects are *Curse of the Faceless Man*, *What Ever Happened to Aunt Alice?*, *The Spell*, *Cruise into Terror* and *Maneaters Are Loose!*

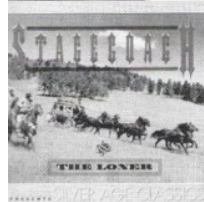
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Lamb to the Slaughter

The Curse of the Werewolf

He . . . was curious about those strange dreams in which he would yearn to race on all fours through a forest, up hill and down dale. His uncle quieted him. "It's nothing. Occasionally boys will have that. You'll get over it."

—Guy Endore,
The Werewolf of Paris

by Lelia Loban

During the opening credits of *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* (1960), the viewer sees a prolonged closeup of haunted, bloodshot eyes, welling with tears. It's a look of shame, self-loathing, regret, and exhaustion, but also a look of intelligence. The camera shows just enough of the dirty, abnormally hairy skin to indicate that these eyes are the windows into the soul of the werewolf, and that he is indeed cursed: not only doomed, but miserably, helplessly aware of it. This is no superficial animal man.

Terence Fisher directed this Hammer classic (also known as *THE WOLFMAN* and *THE CURSE OF SINIESTRO*), filmed at Bray Studios in 1960 and released by Universal in 1961. As a fledgling actor in his early twenties, Oliver Reed got £120 per week for four weeks of work as lycanthrope Leon Corido, a role so successful that (unfortunately for horror fans!) it encouraged him to leave Hammer for a career as a leading man in mainstream films. With his firm-jawed face, strong body, and werewolf makeup by Roy Ashton, Reed looked extraordinarily convincing. In an interview with John Brosnan (*The House of Hammer*, December 1976), Ashton praised the good working environment at Bray Studios that contributed to the quality of Hammer Films of that period, despite their low budgets. The producer, Anthony Hinds, wrote the unusually thoughtful *CURSE* script, under his pseudonym of John Elder. He based it loosely on a 1934 novel, *The Werewolf of Paris*, by Guy Endore, the pseudonym of novelist and screenwriter Harry Relis (1900-1970).

The movie lost money. However, many commentators consider Hammer's *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* "the nearest thing to a cinema classic on the theme," as Basil Copper puts it in *The Werewolf in Legend, Fact and Art* (St. Martin's, 1977). The majority of critics of this film praise it.

The movie proper opens as a beggar gets directions to the Castle Siniestro. Climbing the cliff to the castle in his cloak and wide-brimmed hat, the beggar carries his scanty possessions tied up in a floral-printed sack slung over his shoulder. In this fine performance by Richard Wordsworth (who also distinguished himself for Hammer as the alien-infected astronaut in 1956's *THE QUAT-ERMAS XPERIMENT*), the beggar strongly resembles the traditional design for Card 0, *The Fool*, starting his journey through the Tarot, the Book of Life. All he lacks is the dog snapping at his heels. But in a sense, he does travel with a dog . . .

In a scene similar to the opening of Hammer's 1959 production of *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*, the simpleminded tramp asks for food and alms at the wedding feast of the Marques Siniestro (Anthony Dawson). The pathetic bride (Josephine Llewellyn), obviously the victim of an arranged marriage, watches in dismay as her sadistic bridegroom teases the beggar. She works up the nerve to make a timid protest: "He's a man, not an animal."

Not for long. The Marques gets the beggar drunk, then "buys" him for 10 pesetas as a pet for the Marquesa and makes him perform demeaning doggie tricks for scraps. ("Here, dog, here's your bone. Come and get it like a good dog.") The wine-befuddled beggar degrades himself,

grovelling and dancing clumsily, while the noblemen laugh and yip-yip at him. Unfortunately, he takes the liberty of telling the Marques to "Have a good night," with a hint of a leer at the beautiful Marquesa. The Marques promptly has the beggar tossed in the castle dungeon, where he's fed raw meat and water, but otherwise forgotten for half a century.

The Marquesa dies young, as the Marques degenerates into the embodiment of his bestial nature: a disgusting, straggly-haired, syphilitic-looking creature who picks at the pustules on his face. When a beautiful serving girl, vulnerable because she's mute (Yvonne Romain) dares to reject his sexual advances, he calls her a "vixen" (typical of how he regards people as animals) and orders her tossed into the dungeon, too.

By this time, the cruel conditions and isolation have destroyed the beggar's humanity. The wolfish man rapes

the beautiful servant. Then, exhausted, he drops dead. The servant girl is dragged back to the Marques, but, instead of submitting, she stabs him to death and escapes. Unlike the "fairer sex" in most horror films, women in *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* do considerably more than just scream and faint.

Yet the girl, too, is now tainted. She lives like an animal in the wilderness until a kindly scholar, Alfredo Corido (Clifford Evans), finds her floating face down in a stream and rescues her. He and his housekeeper, Teresa (Hira Talfrey), give the girl a home until she dies in childbirth.

Unlike the brutal Marques, Alfredo treats his servant with respect. Their relationship seems so warm and comfortable that the two resemble an old married couple. (More than half the critics who have written about this movie misidentify Teresa and Alfredo as husband and wife.) Together, they raise Leon to young adulthood.

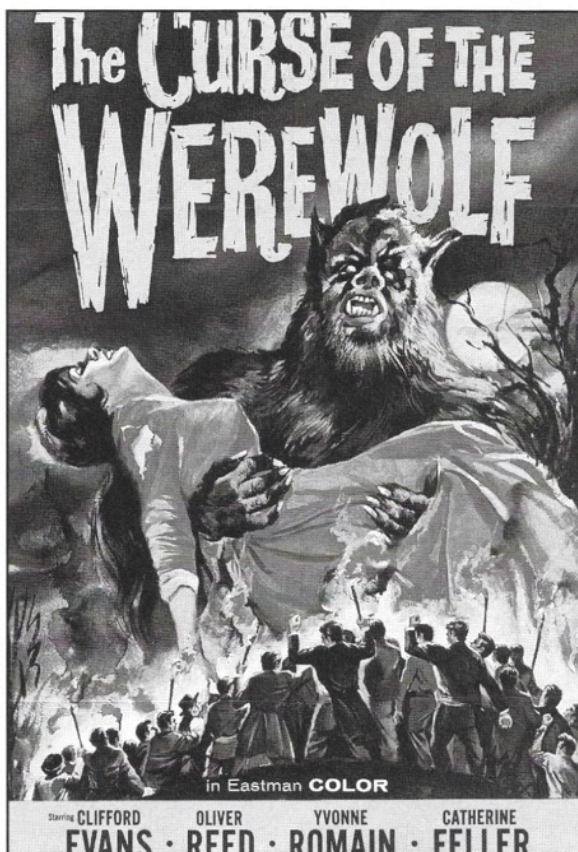
Little Leon comes into the world with many folkloric werewolf omens against him. The bastard son of a werewolf/rapist and

an attempted suicide who dies in childbirth, he's born on Christmas Day (in disrespect of Christ's birthday), with hair covering the palms of his hands. The mournful howl of a wolf in the distance blends with the cry of the newborn babe. When he's baptized, the holy water boils in the font.

The latent lycanthropic potential awakens when the six-year-old Leon, trying to breathe life into a dead squirrel, inadvertently tastes its blood. He starts climbing out his window at night. After these forays, he falls into a stupor, like the aftermath of a seizure. Later, he remembers what he's done only as a feverish nightmare.

When, on the very night the forest warden (Warren Mitchell) claims he's shot and wounded a wolf, Leon awakens in bed with a bullet in his leg, his foster parents realize he's the predator killing local livestock. Alfredo reluctantly puts bars on the boy's bedroom window, "to keep out the nightmares." (In truth, of course, it's to keep in the nightmare.) Later, Alfredo sees Leon transform and try to escape through the reinforced window.

The sturdy-looking Justin Walters, as young Leon, looks as if he could grow up to be the burly Oliver Reed, and acts the role convincingly, too, showing Leon's innocent human intelligence one moment and animal cunning



Uniquely, **THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF** (1961) follows a lycanthrope's progress from birth to death. **BELOW:** Daddy (Richard Wordsworth) is a seedy beggar thrown into a dungeon and forgotten for decades until he degenerates into something just short of an animal. **RIGHT:** Mommy (Yvonne Romain) is a mute servant girl raped by the beggar. Tended by housekeeper Teresa (Hira Talfrey) and a rather crazed-looking midwife (Kitty Atwood), she gives birth to her illegitimate son on Christmas Day—not a good sign. **PAGE 59 LEFT:** The little bastard (Justin Walters) tells his “uncle” (Clifford Evans) about his bad dreams, but dreams don’t explain why the child awakens one night with a bullet in his leg. **PAGE 59 RIGHT:** Grown to young manhood, Leon (Oliver Reed) bids farewell to Teresa and Uncle Alfredo as he sets out to make his way in the world.



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the next. At the age of six, Leon already can grow little fangs and sprout strangely thick tufts of hair on his arms and hands, but the bars hold him, and the killing stops. For the time being, Leon's secret is safe, even from him. As he grows, however, the beast grows as well, kept in check only by Leon's stable, loving home life. (This “cure” is in striking contrast to 1935's **WEREWOLF OF LONDON**. There, the beastman's loved ones aren't his saviors, but his prime victims.)

Teresa, calm, intelligent and resourceful, is the first to figure out that Leon might be a werewolf. She accepts the challenge of mothering this boy, anyway. Unfortunately, as Leon grows up, he can't remain in this sheltered environment forever. With adult awareness, he begins to suspect that his “nightmares” might be memories of actual events.

Leonard G. Heldreth, in “The Beast Within: Sexuality and Metamorphosis in Horror Films” (in *Eros in the Mind's Eye: Sexuality and the Fantastic in Art and Film*, edited by Donald Palumbo, Greenwood Press, 1986), connects the fictional struggle to control the

lycanthropic nature with an adolescent's real-life struggle to master burgeoning sexual impulses. “As the werewolf finds his body changing against his will, so teenagers contend with unwanted erections, expanding bosoms, and menstrual periods that frighten and

embarrass them. The werewolf's most obvious physical change is the growth of hair on the face and body; the growth of facial hair in men and body hair in both sexes is a secondary sexual characteristic that signals puberty.” According to teen folklore, hair on the palms of the hands betrays masturbation. The waxing and waning of the bestial personality represents the hormonal mood swings of adolescence. The emergence of the beast during the full moon parallels menstruation, as if lycanthropy were unisex PMS from hell. “Losing control of the body, turning into an animal, letting the impulse towards violence take control, being rejected by society—these fears, especially prevalent in adolescence, suggest that the animal side of human nature, the beast within, can overcome the human side.”

In **THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF**, the Priest (John Gabriel) describes how wandering bestial spirits can invade human beings, “usually at the moment of birth. Then the soul and the spirit war with each other to gain mastery of the body. But if the soul of the man is strong and clean, it will generally exorcise the spirit of the beast before it is many years old, but if for some reason the soul is weak, an inherited weakness, an accident of birth, then . . .” He trails off, meaningfully. Leon, of course, has just such an inherited weakness.

The priest continues: “A werewolf is a body with a soul and a spirit that are constantly at war. The spirit is that of a wolf, and whatever weakens the human soul—vice, greed, hatred, solitude, especially at the cycle of the full moon, when the forces of evil are at their strongest—these bring the spirit of the wolf to the fore. And in turn, whatever weakens the spirit of the beast—warmth, fellowship, love—raise the human soul.”

Peter Hutchings, among a number of other critics, notes that in many Hammer Horrors, the dominant male characters “embody . . . the debilitating effects of sexual desire. This is most apparent in **THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF** where Leon's un-willed transformations into a ravening beast are linked with sexual desire, with one of these transformations actually taking place inside a brothel.” (*Hammer and Beyond: The British Horror Film*, Manchester University Press, 1995) The nobleman and the beggar who assault Leon's mother also show that this corruption crosses lines of society, from the highest rank to the lowest.

Pure or higher love can save, just as lust can corrupt, but anger, jealousy, and other negative emotions can cancel out the benefit of love. Leon finds his true love, Cristina (Catherine Feller), the daughter of the wine merchant who hires him. Alas, her social-climbing father (Ewen Solon) has already engaged her to rich, snotty Rico Gomez (David Conville).



Photo courtesy of Dick Korman

Leon goes to a brothel and drowns his sorrows. Drunkenness, like drug abuse, has long been connected with werewolf transformations. (In fact, in most Slavic languages, the word for werewolf doubles as a slang word for drunkard.) Leon's coworker, Jose (Martin Mathews), gets silly when sloshed, but, typically for a wolfman, Leon can't hold his booze and turns into a dangerously mean drunk. Under the bad influence of lust for the prostitute Vera (Sheila Brennan), who lures him to her room, he transforms into his werewolf form and murders her. Then he kills his happy-go-lucky coworker, too. By committing these grave, irreversible crimes, Leon has doomed himself.

When an audience sees someone install bars on a werewolf's window, they know the wolf will tackle those bars at some point. The big surprise in **CURSE**, and another indication of its sophistication, is that Leon never breaks out through those bars. Surprise: when the stresses of Leon's new adult life overwhelm him, just as he's beginning to figure out what's the matter with him, he staggers back to his surrogate parents' home and breaks into his old room, where he can regress to childhood, sleep off his werewolf transformation, and feel safe, like an animal in a familiar den. It's false security, however, because soon his stepfather tells him the terrible history withheld from the child, and the man must face the fact that he's out of control, too dangerous to run loose. The priest advises chaining Leon, but he can't tolerate chains, so he escapes back to the winery.

Leon's true love, Cristina, another strong female character, now decides she's willing to defy her father to elope with Leon. Not realizing he's a werewolf, she spends a night of the full moon holding him and watching over him. In response to her loving care, instead of transforming, Leon remains in human form. But the police, looking for the murderer of Jose, close in. By the time he's supposed to meet Cristina to elope, they've jailed him, effectively separating him from his one hope of salvation. Then he kills again (Michael Ripper, naturally), to escape. Not even Cristina or his surrogate parents can save him, now. Leon's struggle between human soul and beast spirit becomes a struggle between death wish (human) and a will to live (beast).

THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF contains considerably less sensational material than Endore's novel. In the book, the rapist responsible for cursing his descendants with lycanthropy is a Roman Catholic priest. By contrast, the only priest character in the movie is a gentle, intelligent man. Several major characters in the novel go through crises of faith, and make anti-Catholic or even atheistic arguments, while the main characters in the movie remain devout, traditional Christians. The father of the werewolf's lover, a stereotypical Jew in the novel, becomes Christian in the



Photo courtesy of Dick Korman

movie. This man, winery owner Don Fernando, an unsympathetic character well-played by Ewen Solon, is lame. The physical handicap seems to replace the “handicap” of the original character's Jewishness! (As Stapleton in Hammer's **HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES**, Solon suffered the disability of webbed fingers.)

The movie also avoids the novel's most controversial sexual material. As a young adult, Endore's werewolf (named Bertrand Caillet) violently rapes his own mother. In the movie, Leon's biological mother dies in childbirth. He never harms his surrogate mother, with whom he has a wholesome relationship. Beginning in early childhood, Endore's werewolf digs up scores of graves. He dismembers, eats, and otherwise abuses the corpses. The script converts the grave robberies to the slaughter of animals, while drastically lowering Endore's body count of rapes and other crimes against people, which the camera suggests more often than shows.

Often, “real life” werewolf legends closely resemble true crime tales, many of them collected by Montague Summers in *The Werewolf*, first published in 1933, and by Sabine Baring-Gould in *The Book of Were-Wolves*, first published in 1865, both reprinted numerous times since. In many of these stories, the “werewolf” acts like an animal without actually turning into a supernatural were-creature.

The character of the Marques in **CURSE** probably owes something to the historical Marquis de Sade, but also resembles Gilles de Laval, Marquis de Retz (also spelled de Rais, i.e., Marshall of France). Gilles was a Jeffery Dahmer type of sexual psychopath, mass murderer, and cannibal. It seems likely that makeup artist Roy Ashton, scriptwriter John Elder, and actor Anthony Dawson drew on Baring-Gould's account of Gilles for the character of the Marques Sinistro. The similarities include many striking details, such as his facial twitches and his habit of picking at his blemishes. Of course, there are a number of differences as well, including nationality and the fact that Gilles fixated on little boys, while the Marques Sinistro lusts after grown (typically for Hammer, very grown) women.

Interestingly, “de Laval” means “of the valley,” which is similar to Endore's “Pitaval” family that spawns the evil priest who rapes the servant and starts the werewolf curse. (“Pit” is a fictional river.) Elder more or less turns this priest into the Marques, but Elder may have incorporated some of the priest (or the Gillesian qualities of the priest) into Leon, too. In 1440, Gilles was tried, convicted, then simultaneously hanged and burned alive, while cathedral bells gonged him out with the “Dies Irae.” Similarly, the ringing of church bells opens the movie. At the end, society's justice, in the form of a mob, “tries” Leon, who dies in the church bell tower, which is on fire, with the bells ringing again. Perhaps unintentionally, the scene somewhat resembles the death of Gilles.

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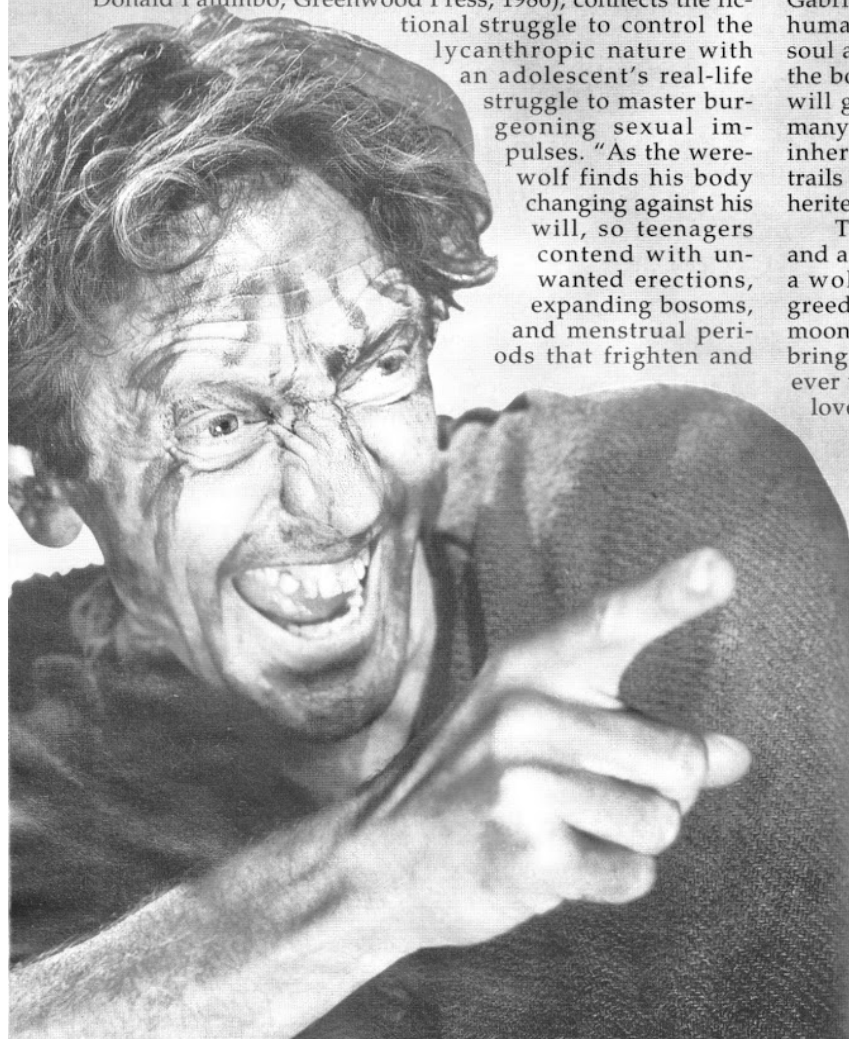
embarrass them. The werewolf’s most obvious physical change is the growth of hair on the face and body; the growth of facial hair in men and body hair in both sexes is a secondary sexual characteristic that signals puberty.” According to teen folklore, hair on the palms of the hands betrays masturbation. The waxing and waning of the bestial personality represents the hormonal mood swings of adolescence. The emergence of the beast during the full moon parallels menstruation, as if lycanthropy were unisex PMS from hell. “Losing control of the body, turning into an animal, letting the impulse towards violence take control, being rejected by society—these fears, especially prevalent in adolescence, suggest that the animal side of human nature, the beast within, can overcome the human side.”

In *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, the Priest (John Gabriel) describes how wandering bestial spirits can invade human beings, “usually at the moment of birth. Then the soul and the spirit war with each other to gain mastery of the body. But if the soul of the man is strong and clean, it will generally exorcise the spirit of the beast before it is many years old, but if for some reason the soul is weak, an inherited weakness, an accident of birth, then . . .” He trails off, meaningfully. Leon, of course, has just such an inherited weakness.

The priest continues: “A werewolf is a body with a soul and a spirit that are constantly at war. The spirit is that of a wolf, and whatever weakens the human soul—vice, greed, hatred, solitude, especially at the cycle of the full moon, when the forces of evil are at their strongest—these bring the spirit of the wolf to the fore. And in turn, whatever weakens the spirit of the beast—warmth, fellowship, love—raise the human soul.”

Peter Hutchings, among a number of other critics, notes that in many Hammer Horrors, the dominant male characters “embody . . . the debilitating effects of sexual desire. This is most apparent in *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* where Leon’s unwilld transformations into a ravening beast are linked with sexual desire, with one of these transformations actually taking place inside a brothel.” (*Hammer and Beyond: The British Horror Film*, Manchester University Press, 1995) The nobleman and the beggar who assault Leon’s mother also show that this corruption crosses lines of society, from the highest rank to the lowest.

Pure or higher love can save, just as lust can corrupt, but anger, jealousy, and other negative emotions can cancel out the benefit of love. Leon finds his true love, Cristina (Catherine Feller), the daughter of the wine merchant who hires him. Alas, her social-climbing father (Ewen Solon) has already engaged her to rich, snotty Rico Gomez (David Conville).





Leon goes to a brothel and drowns his sorrows. Drunkenness, like drug abuse, has long been connected with werewolf transformations. (In fact, in most Slavic languages, the word for werewolf doubles as a slang word for drunkard.) Leon's coworker, Jose (Martin Mathews), gets silly when sloshed, but, typically for a wolfman, Leon can't hold his booze and turns into a dangerously mean drunk. Under the bad influence of lust for the prostitute Vera (Sheila Brennan), who lures him to her room, he transforms into his werewolf form and murders her. Then he kills his happy-go-lucky coworker, too. By committing these grave, irreversible crimes, Leon has doomed himself.

When an audience sees someone install bars on a werewolf's window, they know the wolf will tackle those bars at some point. The big surprise in *CURSE*, and another indication of its sophistication, is that Leon never breaks out through those bars. Surprise: when the stresses of Leon's new adult life overwhelm him, just as he's beginning to figure out what's the matter with him, he staggers back to his surrogate parents' home and breaks into his old room, where he can regress to childhood, sleep off his werewolf transformation, and feel safe, like an animal in a familiar den. It's false security, however, because soon his stepfather tells him the terrible history withheld from the child, and the man must face the fact that he's out of control, too dangerous to run loose. The priest advises chaining Leon, but he can't tolerate chains, so he escapes back to the winery.

Leon's true love, Cristina, another strong female character, now decides she's willing to defy her father to elope with Leon. Not realizing he's a werewolf, she spends a night of the full moon holding him and watching over him. In response to her loving care, instead of transforming, Leon remains in human form. But the police, looking for the murderer of Jose, close in. By the time he's supposed to meet Cristina to elope, they've jailed him, effectively separating him from his one hope of salvation. Then he kills again (Michael Ripper, naturally), to escape. Not even Cristina or his surrogate parents can save him, now. Leon's struggle between human soul and beast spirit becomes a struggle between death wish (human) and a will to live (beast).

THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF contains considerably less sensational material than Endore's novel. In the book, the rapist responsible for cursing his descendants with lycanthropy is a Roman Catholic priest. By contrast, the only priest character in the movie is a gentle, intelligent man. Several major characters in the novel go through crises of faith, and make anti-Catholic or even atheistic arguments, while the main characters in the movie remain devout, traditional Christians. The father of the werewolf's lover, a stereotypical Jew in the novel, becomes Christian in the



movie. This man, winery owner Don Fernando, an unsympathetic character well-played by Ewen Solon, is lame. The physical handicap seems to replace the "handicap" of the original character's Jewishness! (As Stapleton in Hammer's *HOUD OF THE BASKERVILLES*, Solon suffered the disability of webbed fingers.)

The movie also avoids the novel's most controversial sexual material. As a young adult, Endore's werewolf (named Bertrand Caillet) violently rapes his own mother. In the movie, Leon's biological mother dies in childbirth. He never harms his surrogate mother, with whom he has a wholesome relationship. Beginning in early childhood, Endore's werewolf digs up scores of graves. He dismembers, eats, and otherwise abuses the corpses. The script converts the grave robberies to the slaughter of animals, while drastically lowering Endore's body count of rapes and other crimes against people, which the camera suggests more often than shows.

Often, "real life" werewolf legends closely resemble true crime tales, many of them collected by Montague Summers in *The Werewolf*, first published in 1933, and by Sabine Baring-Gould in *The Book of Were-Wolves*, first published in 1865, both reprinted numerous times since. In many of these stories, the "werewolf" acts like an animal without actually turning into a supernatural were-creature.

The character of the Marques in *CURSE* probably owes something to the historical Marquis de Sade, but also resembles Gilles de Laval, Marshal de Retz (also spelled de Rais, i.e., Marshall of France). Gilles was a Jeffery Dahmer type of sexual psychopath, mass murderer, and cannibal. It seems likely that makeup artist Roy Ashton, scriptwriter John Elder, and actor Anthony Dawson drew on Baring-Gould's account of Gilles for the character of the Marques Siniestro. The similarities include many striking details, such as his facial twitches and his habit of picking at his blemishes. Of course, there are a number of differences as well, including nationality and the fact that Gilles fixated on little boys, while the Marques Siniestro lusts after grown (typically for Hammer, very grown) women.

Interestingly, "de Laval" means "of the valley," which is similar to Endore's "Pitaval" family that spawns the evil priest who rapes the servant and starts the werewolf curse. ("Pit" is a fictional river.) Elder more or less turns this priest into the Marques, but Elder may have incorporated some of the priest (or the Gillesian qualities of the priest) into Leon, too. In 1440, Gilles was tried, convicted, then simultaneously hanged and burned alive, while cathedral bells gonged him out with the "Dies Irae." Similarly, the ringing of church bells opens the movie. At the end, society's justice, in the form of a mob, "tries" Leon, who dies in the church bell tower, which is on fire, with the bells ringing again. Perhaps unintentionally, the scene somewhat resembles the death of Gilles.



LEFT: In one of the classic scenes of lycanthropic cinema, the Old Soak (Michael Ripper) finds himself imprisoned with a desperate young man (Oliver Reed) who gradually grows hairier . . . and hairier . . . and hairier . . . RIGHT: The Wolfman (Reed) and the Servant Girl (Yvonne Romain) never actually meet in *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, since she is the beast's mother and dies in childbirth. This publicity still inadvertently hints at the incestuous theme of the film's source material, Guy Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris*.

Several critics cite the historical case of Sgt. Bertrand, also described in Baring-Gould, as the historical source of the character of Leon in *CURSE*. Bertrand probably *does* influence Guy Endore's werewolf, Bertrand. The historic "vampire" Bertrand was actually a ghoul, a necrophiliac, sentenced to a year in prison in 1848 for desecrating graves in much the same way as does Endore's character. However, John Elder deleted this aspect of Endore's plot. Almost nothing of Sgt. Bertrand remains in the movie script—a wise move, since Bertrand's necrophilia definitely wouldn't have survived the censors.

An important aspect of Endore's story is sociopolitical: the Franco-Prussian War figuratively turns *everyone* into werewolves. All that remains of this subtext in the movie is the bestial behavior of the mob of peasants with torches, in a scene that owes more to monster-movie traditions than anything in Endore's book.

While deleting some material from the novel, Elder added ideas of his own, including symbolic character names, most of them Spanish words. Some are simple and obvious: The Marques' family name, Siniestro, means "sinister," of course. "Valiente" means brave or courageous, a good name for the forest warden who protects the flocks and hunts the werewolf with his rifle. Cristina is a variant of Cristiana, meaning "Christian," appropriate for a good, faithful woman. Rico, the name of Cristina's wealthy boyfriend, means "rich." Other names are more complicated or amusing. Sassy lady Senora Zumara runs a brothel. "Zuma" means "juicy," while the verb "zumar" means "to buzz, hum, or act sassy." The noun "zumba" is slang for bantering, jeering, hooting, or booing. Dominique, the name of the humble shepherd who owns the innocent dog put to death for the werewolf's livestock killing, isn't a Spanish word, but it's a saint's name. St. Dominic (1170-1221), a Castilian and the founder of the Dominican Order, lived in poverty and shepherded people. (His mission was to convert the Albigensian heretics.) His emblems are a star and a dog. Teresa, the name of Leon's surrogate mother, might refer to the mystic, Santa Teresa de Avila, said to have prophetic dreams. Teresa in the movie has a strange, prophetic dream of Leon's grim future. Leon means "lion," appropriate for a brave man who transforms into a ferocious beast. His adopted last name, Corido, is not quite a word in Spanish, but the noun "corrida" means both "bullfight" (man against beast) and "journey," while the verb "correr," of which "corrido" is past participle, means "to run or to flee," or, oddly enough, "to shame, embarrass,



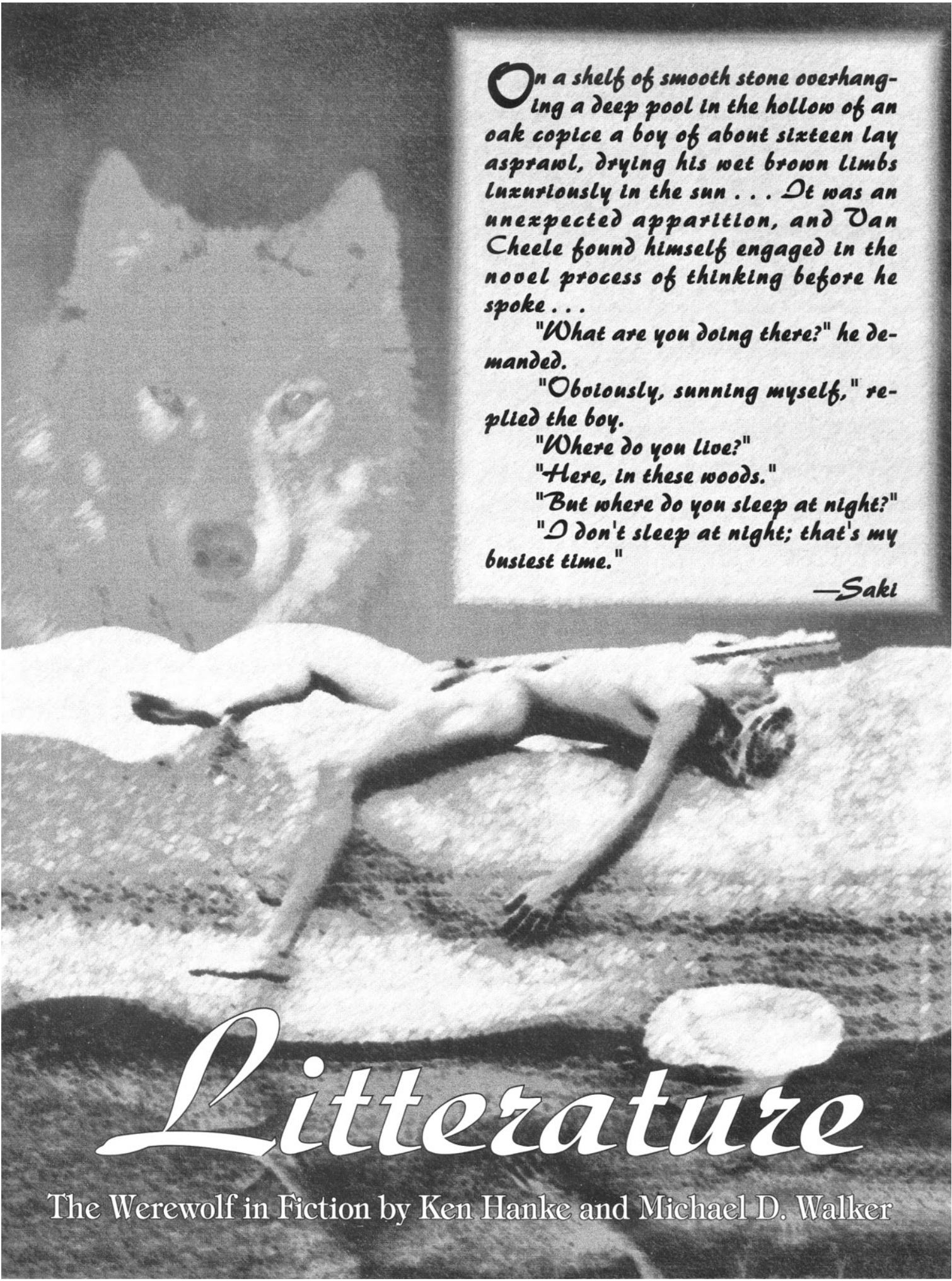
or humiliate." All these meanings seem appropriate for this cursed family.

Lawrence McCallum ("Men Into Wolves: The History of Lycanthropic Lore on the Movie Screen," *The Scream Factory*, 1994) points out that "Elder's script . . . has Leon suffering this horrible transformation whenever he is placed in circumstances that remind him of his father's decadent surroundings. A sleazy public inn, a sordid brothel, and dingy jail cell cause Leon's dark side to emerge. Similarly, each of us has a dark side that civilized man attempts to suppress." McCallum errs in that these circumstances can't actually remind Leon of his father, who died during Leon's conception. Rather, it is loveless, friendless circumstances that trigger the transformations.

Leon is the living embodiment of the sins of his fathers, and of original sin. The price of redemption is his life, but even that price might not be high enough to save him from Hell. James F. Iaccino, in *Psychological Reflections on Cinematic Terror: Jungian Archetypes in Horror Films* (Praeger, 1994), sees Leon's dual personality as an example of the Jungian "cursed wanderer" archetype. Neither fully animal nor fully human, he can never fit in anywhere and can only escape his isolation through death. Yet as Iaccino points out, "Reed's character never changes back to his likable persona upon his death, as Chaney's does, but remains in the cursed shadow guise. Perhaps director Terence Fisher intended to show how inescapable the curse truly is or at least wanted to give the impression that Leon's body will be forever possessed by his 'dark half.' . . . I personally believe that Leon's soul is saved, because . . . Alfredo realizes that the boy cannot go on with a 'divided' personality and so destroys the material part in the hopes that the spiritual half may be liberated and transcend its tainted, corporeal existence." That's fine as far as it goes, but if the human soul transcends the death of the body, what's to stop the beast spirit from living on, too, since according to the Priest it lived without a body before it got into the vulnerable Leon? (On a practical level, Leon's nontransformation may simply have been the result of budgetary restrictions. Still, it effectively reflects the conclusion of *The Werewolf of Paris*, in which Bertrand's grave is opened and the skeleton of a wolf is found.)

THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF makes an explicit connection between the beast inside and original sin, by having Alfredo kill Leon not just with any old silver bullet,

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On a shelf of smooth stone overhanging a deep pool in the hollow of an oak copse a boy of about sixteen lay asprawl, drying his wet brown limbs luxuriously in the sun . . . It was an unexpected apparition, and Van Cheele found himself engaged in the novel process of thinking before he spoke . . .

"What are you doing there?" he demanded.

"Obolously, sunning myself," replied the boy.

"Where do you live?"

"Here, in these woods."

"But where do you sleep at night?"

"I don't sleep at night; that's my busiest time."

—Saki

Litterature

The Werewolf in Fiction by Ken Hanke and Michael D. Walker

The field of werewolf literature is rich with titles—some brilliant, some dismal, and most somewhere in between. While not as flooded as, say, the Star Trek assembly line or vampire of the month club, there is something for everyone. The werewolf myth itself dates far back into the earliest folklore, existing in some form in almost every culture imaginable, while the use of the werewolf in literature dates at least as far back as George William MacArthur Reynold's *Wagner, The Wehr-wolf*, a sensationalistic work published in serialized form from 1846 through 1847. (An edited version appeared in 1975.) Over the years, the tales have changed form more often than Lon Chaney, evolving from secondary scenes in Gothic romance novels to modern day wolf mutants bearing little or no resemblance (physically or otherwise) to their forbears.

The one thing that sets the werewolf quite apart from his (its?) primary horror brethren, Dracula and the Frankenstein Monster, is the lack of a central work of fiction on the topic. There is no single werewolf novel or even story to which one can point and say, "This is where it all began." Yet, unlike other movie monsters—most notably the Mummy, which boasts almost no literary antecedents, apart from possibly Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's story, "The Ring of Thoth" (1894) and Bram Stoker's *The Jewel of the Seven Stars* (1912)—the werewolf clearly has an historical place in literature. Even Alexander Dumas tried his quill on the subject in an 1857 opus entitled *Le Meneur Des Loups* (*The Wolf Leader*), a work highly regarded by those who have been fortunate enough to encounter this elusive title.

In his collection, *The Mammoth Book of Werewolves* (Carroll & Graf, 1994), British fantasy writer Stephen Jones makes the case that the werewolf in literature might properly be said to originate with Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* in 1886, and while there is certainly some validity in this statement, not only did Messrs. Reynolds and Dumas get there first, but Sabine Baring-Gould's nonfictional *The Book of Werewolves* (1865) also predates Stevenson's tale. Moreover, Stevenson's Mr. Hyde is not—Edgar G. Ulmer's no-budget DAUGHTER OF DR. JEKYLL (1957) aside—properly speaking a werewolf, but a chemically unleashed beast reflective of Dr. Jekyll's darker, normally subverted side. While this in part does fit the concept of the werewolf as the beast within a man and a statement on the duality of human nature, the depiction is markedly different (in the most famous cinematic version of the tale, the 1931 Rouben Mamoulian film, Hyde more closely resembles an apelike primitive man), as well as having no connection to folklore. (Other scientifically-induced filmic lycanthropes can be found in 1957's *I WAS A TEENAGE WEREWOLF* and 1959's *THE WEREWOLF*.)

While relatively slight, perhaps, one of the most interesting modern werewolf stories is probably Saki's "Gabriel-Ernest," a singularly disconcerting short piece found in his 1910 volume, *Reginald in Russia*. Saki—or as he was born, Hector Hugh Munro (1870-1916)—was an En-

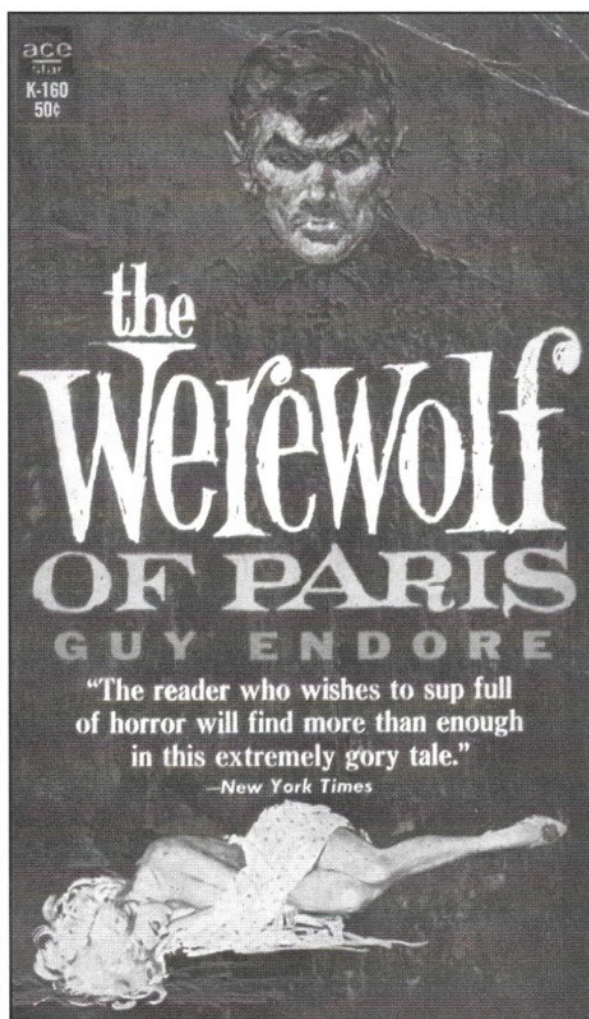
glishman who copped his exotic pen name from Fitzgerald's *Rubayat of Omar Khayyam* (1859) and specialized in writing effortlessly satirical and witty stories for a variety of newspapers—tales that, quite frequently, were likely to veer off into the fantastic and even horrific. Were it not for the fact that Saki's story "The Open Window" has long been a standard feature of U.S. high school literature courses, he would probably be largely unknown in this country. This is unfortunate—perhaps nowhere more so than in the case of his werewolf tale.

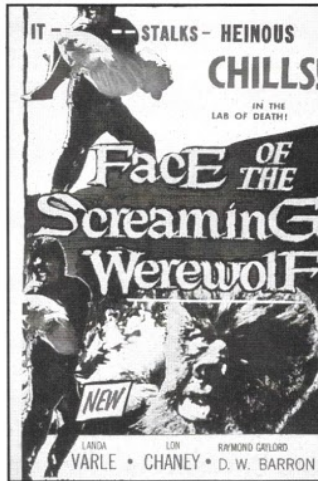
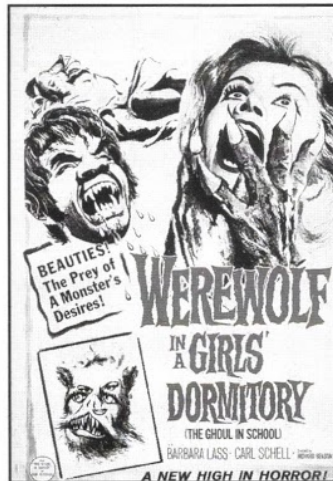
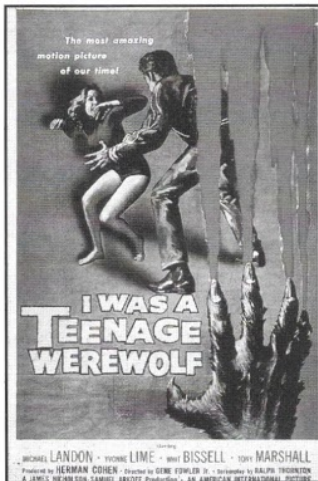
Amazingly brief—the story takes up less than seven pages in *The Complete Works of Saki* (Penguin, 1982)—"Gabriel-Ernest" is both a model of a straightforward werewolf tale and a perfect example of the writer's wit and sophistication. By the fifth paragraph of the story, he has completely sketched in the main character, the dilettantish Van Cheele, finally nailing him down with, "He had a stuffed bittern in his study, and he knew the name of quite

a number of wildflowers, so his aunt has possibly some justification in describing him as a great naturalist." Actually, the "great naturalist" is mostly concerned with taking long walks in the woods for no other reason than to afford material for any conversation into which he might be drawn. It is on such a stroll that he encounters a strange—and strangely naked—boy "of about sixteen." The incident (and several passages after it) is not without a peculiarly suggestive, but far from blatant, homoerotic undercurrent. (Indeed, the exchange with the unaccountably well-spoken "wild" boy smacks very much of a street hustler sizing up a potential mark!) The very oddness of it, combined with the lightness of tone with which Saki has invested the story, makes it even more chilling when the boy freely admits to feeding on flesh ("and he pronounced the word with slow relish, as though he were tasting it"), especially when he reveals a penchant for devouring children, complaining, "they're usually too well locked in at night, when I do most of my hunting. It's quite two months since I tasted child flesh."

The bulk of the story then concerns the boy inflicting himself on Van Cheele's household, effectively taking in the man's aunt (who dubs the creature Gabriel-Ernest), and ultimately making a meal of a neighboring child—an act that ironically gets him branded as a hero when it is presumed that he was himself killed in a vain effort to save his . . . dinner. As noted, the story is slight and Saki never lets up on the sense of lightness even at the grimmest times (when Van Cheele discovers that his charge is a werewolf, he realizes the impracticality of warning his aunt by telegram of such an announcement), yet it has the singular power of conviction and a simple acceptance of the existence of such a creature that keeps it in the memory long after many more elaborate werewolf stories have faded.

Numerous werewolf stories cropped up in the years following, including Jessie Douglas Kerruish's *The Hammond Mystery* (1922), which made one of the more interesting werewolf films of the forties when 20th Century Fox





cashed in on the success of *THE WOLF MAN* (1941) with John Brahm's stylish, low-budget version of the book, retitled *THE UNDYING MONSTER* (1942). Also worthy of mention are Robert W. Service's *House of Fear* (1927), Leonard Cline's *Dark Chamber* (1927), Charles Lee Swem's *Werewolf* (1928), and John Dickson Carr's *It Walks by Night* (1930), even though this last more properly might be described as a shaggy wolf story, after the fashion of most of Carr's takes on the supernatural, which are invariably explained away rationally at the end of the book.

The major werewolf book of this era did not arrive until 1934—Guy Endore's *The Werewolf of Paris*. If Saki's short story is a model of conciseness, Endore's book is the perfect example of a brilliantly sprawling novel. Endore ("ne" Harry Relis) used his werewolf story to tackle a number of deeper concerns—especially questions of religion and the behavior of society at large. There is both an uncomfortably satirical tone to the book and more than a hint of distaste for Catholicism. (The affliction of lycanthropy visited upon the main character is in part the result of his being the product of rape by a Roman Catholic priest!) This is not to say that Endore chose to downplay his straight horror elements, since they are all there (to the degree that when Hammer made their film version in 1961, it was possible to excise the other aspects of the novel and yet retain much of the book's traditional horrors).

In every sense, *The Werewolf of Paris* is probably the essential werewolf novel and the closest thing we have to a *Frankenstein* (1818) or *Dracula* (1897) in the literature of lycanthropy. Indeed, the book clearly spawned Universal's addition of a werewolf to its stable of horrors in 1935 with Stuart Walker's *WEREWOLF OF LONDON*. (There are even reports that Endore—who was indeed in Hollywood at that time—worked on the screenplay, which is finally attributed to John Colton, but neither these reports, nor the claim that the film was drawn from a 1929 Oliver Onions' story, "The Master of the House," have been authoritatively substantiated.)

Interestingly, the movies themselves probably generated the most consistently accessible version of werewolf lore, especially

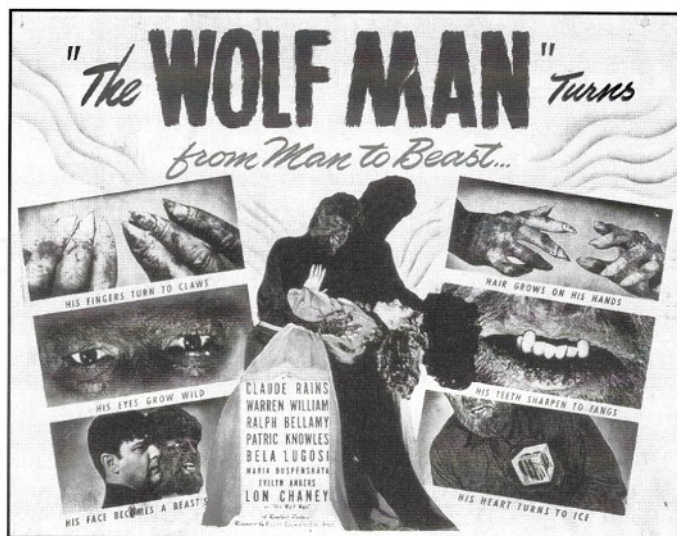
once Universal came out with *THE WOLF MAN*, thereby creating—under the guidance of writer Curt Siodmak and director George Waggner—the archetypal werewolf in the character of Lon Chaney Jr.'s Lawrence Talbot. Regardless of the qualities—variable at best—of the films containing Talbot, the character has become so thoroughly the quintessential werewolf that it is not surprising that one of the best of all werewolf books of recent years is Jeff Rovin's *Return of the Wolf Man* (1998). Here is a work of literature that draws directly from the movies. Indeed, the book continues the saga of the Universal monsters from the point where they left off at the end of *ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN* (1948).

What could very easily have been nothing more than a hopeless conceit becomes a stylish, clever, deeply felt and wholly respectful *extension* of the sagas created so many years ago by so many writers, directors, and actors. Rovin has such an obvious love for—and almost encyclopedic knowledge of—his subject that he completely does right by it. The savvy horror fan will recognize an amazing array of familiar names in the book—character names, character actor names, director names, and various other "in" references pop up throughout. (At one point, the action takes place on the corner of Blue Room Way and Market Street!) But thankfully, none of this is a prerequisite for "getting" the book, which remains a wholly accessible horror tale and one that gracefully bridges the restrained horrors of the thirties and forties with the more graphic demands of the modern age, without betraying either. What Rovin has essentially done is to weave the classics of the horror film into a bona fide mythology.

Pleasantly unassuming, yet sure of his ground, Rovin happily admits that while



he rates works like *The Werewolf of Paris* highly indeed, the favorite werewolf story of his youth was the somewhat less cerebral *Brand of the Werewolf* (1934), a Doc Savage novel by Kenneth Robeson (Lester Dent)! One aspect of *Return* that sometimes jars fans of the old films concerns the lack of even a nominal hero. (Several possible candidates crop up throughout the book, only to meet untimely and decidedly grisly ends.) Universal was never quite like this—even if their *HOUSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1944) *did* climax with nearly everyone dead, it at least had a romantic couple (Peter Coe and Anne Gwynne) who presumably lived happily ever after, though their happy ending occurred about four reels from the end of the film. Asked about his apparent aversion to heroes, Rovin said that he had nothing against them. “We don’t have enough



of them, but in these stories Lawrence Talbot is the hero and you’re stuck with that.” Unfortunately, though Rovin understands that and a good deal more about the mythology he has tapped into and formalized, his plans to do follow-up books with the Universal monsters have come to nought. Scheduling conflicts and Universal’s basic misunderstanding of what they have in their classic monsters



have caused Rovin to depart from the project. What happens next is anyone’s guess, but it seems unlikely that his successors will have anything like the same grasp on the essentials of the myths, let alone the fine attention to detail that makes *Return of the Wolf Man* one of the essential examples of the werewolf in literature.



Rovin About Return

Jeff Rovin interviewed by Ken Hanke

“Where universal horrors were explored and embraced, not feared.” So reads the last line of Jeff Rovin’s novel *Return of the Wolf Man* and it’s a fitting summation of the story and of the tone of the book that was to be the first in a series of Universal Monsters books. It, like the novel, is sure to warm the hearts of everyone who propped him or herself up in front of a late show to marvel at the magic that—as presented in SHOCK THEATER packages at least—once held sway in the Hollywood of the thirties and forties.

I spoke with Jeff Rovin for the LITERATURE article for this issue and upon reflection both Mr. Valley and I decided that the conversation was, like a Universal cast last, worth repeating . . .

Scarlet Street: A surprise question! What is your own favorite werewolf novel or story?

Jeff Rovin: That would be *Brand of the Werewolf*, even though it turned out to be a bogus werewolf. Actually, no—I’m going to have to go with *Wagner the Wehr-wolf* on that one. Apart from it being a seminal story, there was something very melodramatic and atmospheric.

SS: But *Brand of the Werewolf* did have a great impact on you when you were young.

JR: Oh, yeah! I mean, the cover art! It made you think it was the Wolf Man. And the idea that it was Doc Savage on the trail of the werewolf was a very exciting concept—but it had that cheat, of course. That was the great thing about *Wagner*. It wasn’t a cheat. He turned into the brutelike thing and it really had the sense of wonder and torment that’s central to a good horror tale.

SS: In the same vein, what is your favorite werewolf movie?

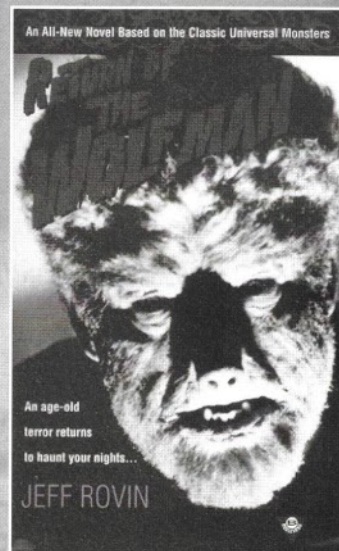
JR: That was, of course, *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*.

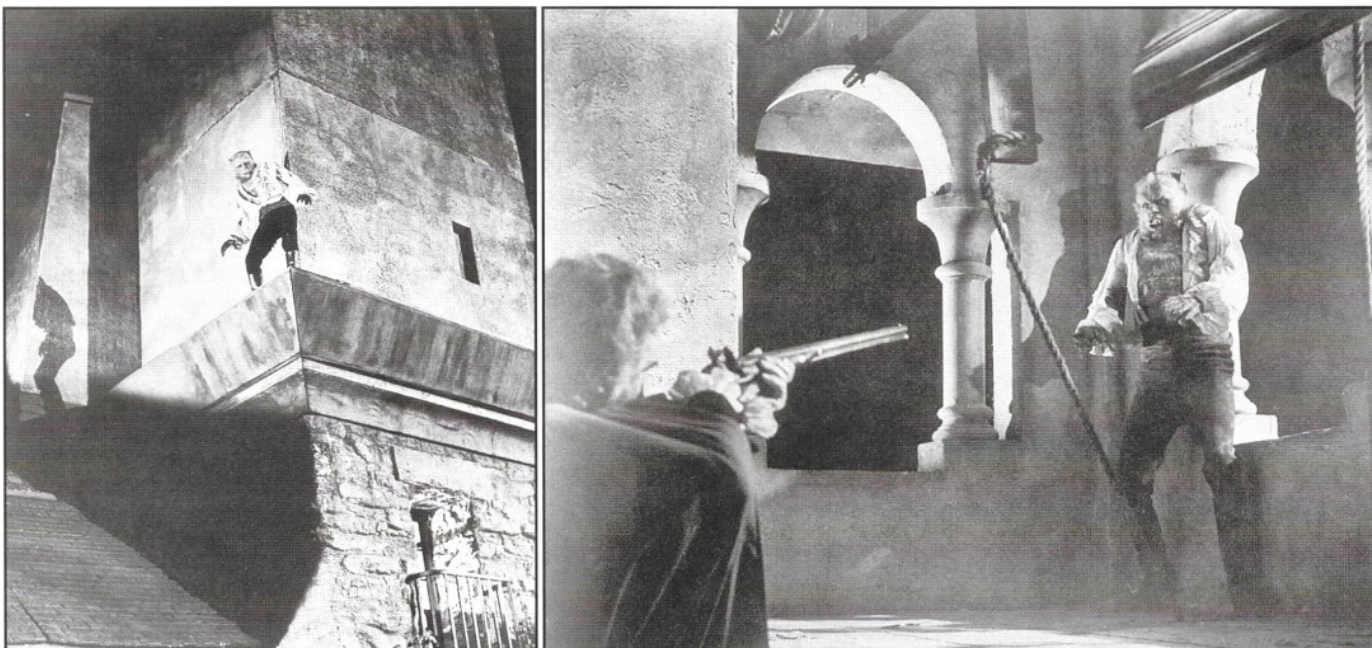
SS: Can you elaborate on that? There are really only two other contenders—*WEREWOLF OF LONDON* and *THE WOLF MAN*. But why *CURSE*?

JR: That’s a fair question. If your knee-jerk reaction is to say *CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, there has to be reason. There was something at once tragic and demonic and absolutely preordained about *CURSE*. After all, he was cursed from birth and you knew how he was going to end up, but for the short time that he was on-camera—the werewolf—there was such a sense of feral majesty about the monster that you couldn’t help but be drawn to it. And it still had so many elements, like the bubbling baptismal water, the howl of the baby, just so many nifty things—and it was in Hammer Color! What more could you want? I wasn’t allowed to see it when it first came out, but there was the poster, there was the Famous Monsters cover, there was the trailer, there was a whole pervasiveness of this gaudy, scary monster thing—and when you finally saw it, it had so much more class than just that. And, of course, it had Oliver Reed and the makeup, which was superb.

SS: With *Return of the Wolf Man*, was it hard to write a straight follow-up to a movie that was as much a comedy as a horror film?

Continued on page 73





LEFT: Oliver Reed reached the heights in his first starring role in *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, so much so that his attempted rooftop escape was repeated seven years later in *OLIVER!* (1968). RIGHT: *CURSE* followed the lead of Universal's *THE WOLF MAN* (1941), with the lycanthrope's dad (Claude Rains in the earlier film, and Clifford Evans as the surrogate father in the later) dispatching his son with something made of silver.

LAMB TO THE SLAUGHTER

Continued from page 60

but one made from a melted-down silver cross. (The script, like Endore's novel, describes the cross as a crucifix, but the movie prop is a plain, undecorated cross, no doubt because melting down an actual three-dimensional image of Jesus might have pushed the already unhappy censors too far.) The bullet, containing the body of Jesus, thus resembles the holy wafer of Communion. According to Christian belief, Jesus died to redeem the sins of humankind. The Communion ritual, with its suggestion of cannibalism, exemplifies the magical Law of Contagion (or Doctrine of Signatures): the wafer is transubstantiated into the blood and body of Christ in Catholic dogma, or represents the blood and body symbolically, in most Protestant dogma. When Alfredo shoots the silver bullet made from the body of Christ into his hirsute foster son (in the church tower, with the bells ringing), the two perform a symbolic Communion, formal redemption of sin.

After threatening to ban the movie, British censors finally gave *CURSE* an X Certificate after several scenes were cut or altered. Finland banned the first release. Werewolfery was not a taboo subject in Spain in 1960. The Spanish film industry had already made several werewolf movies by 1960 and went on to make dozens more. The sex and violence were no more graphic than in other movies released there. Yet Spain reacted more harshly than any other country, banning the film until 1976!

Maybe that's because—unintentionally, perhaps—Anthony Hinds and Terence Fisher included what Spain could readily interpret as a commentary on the Spanish Inquisition in particular and Roman Catholicism in general. Originally, Hinds intended to shoot a different movie, *THE RAPE OF SABENA* (alternately titled *THE INQUISITOR*), directed by John Gilling and set during the Inquisition. The rapist, like the one in *The Werewolf of Paris*, was an evil Roman Catholic priest.

Spain, still trying to live down the Inquisition, deals with a lot of anti-Catholic propaganda, some of it passed around since the Reformation: stories about evil priests violating vows of celibacy by raping nuns, for instance. Not surprisingly, the Roman Catholic Church warned that it would try to get *THE RAPE OF SABENA* banned. Although

Hammer had already constructed the sets and production was already underway, executive producer Michael Carreras bowed to pressure from his father, James Carreras, the head of the studio and a Catholic, to scuttle *THE RAPE OF SABENA*.

Hammer decided not to waste the sets. Anthony Hinds (as John Elder) rewrote his script to change the setting from Endore's Paris to a village in Spain. Hammer also recycled old sets and props from previous movies, including *THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN* (1957). The movie has a superficially "Spanish" atmosphere as a result of the sets, costumes, and some of the music in Benjamin Frankel's excellent score, but *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* is not *THE RAPE OF SABENA* in disguise—not even nearly. Still, the story of *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* begins "200 years ago," or about 1760, during the Inquisition.

The Spanish Inquisition began in 1478. Its most appalling excesses occurred under Torquemada in the 16th century, but the Inquisition was not suppressed in Spain until 1834. While it was not officially sanctioned, persecution of Muslims, Jews, heretics, and even "witches" (a broad category that included werewolves, although Spain tried far fewer werewolf cases than France and the Slavic countries) continued even after that date. Technically, the Roman Holy Office of the Inquisition didn't end until Pope Paul VI reorganized it and renamed it in 1965, five years after Hammer made *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*!

The Inquisition remains a sensitive subject in Spain, in much the same way that slavery troubles people in the United States. The Spanish understandably dislike movies that portray them as ignorant, temperamental, superstitious people who persecute anyone "different" with mob violence. However, progress has been made: *CURSE* is now available on video in Spain.

Even without the Inquisition taking center stage, the BBFC, in the process of cracking down on violence in horror movies at the time, gave Hammer a lot of censorship grief. Terence Fisher, in an interview with John Brosnan (in *The Horror People*, Macdonald and James, 1976), remembered that censors would not allow him to combine horror with sex to the extent of putting full werewolf makeup on Richard Wordsworth as the beggar in the rape scene, but even without fangs the scene was substantially trimmed.



(The currently available versions of the movie restore a few snippets edited out of the first release.) Michael Carreras has said in interviews that he believed more extensive censored footage existed and may have perished in a fire in the studio. No definite evidence of this material has ever turned up.

Even without the lost footage, *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* stands as a classic—arguably, the classic—among lycanthropy films. A few minor quibbles: Sharp-

eyed viewers will spot some trivial anachronisms in the props and sets. And speaking of eyes, Oliver Reed's sometimes change to red-brown when he transforms. Other times, they just stay blue. The script includes two real howlers. Apparently at some point the character of Alfredo Corido replaced an omniscient 20th century narrator, but some of the dialogue remain unchanged from the earlier version of the script. He tells us that this story, in which he's a character, begins "200 years ago." That is one long-lived professor, since he enters the scene, as a mature adult, only 50 years after the back-story begins! Also, the viewer may wonder how Alfredo knows that back-story at all, since the only character he meets who witnesses those events is an illiterate mute. Happily, these inconsistencies don't amount to much in the context of the overall high quality of the movie.

In his interview with John Brosnan, Fisher said he liked *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF* "because of the tremendous interrelation between the characters, between Reed and the girl. Hell, anyone can turn into a werewolf, can't they? But it was his situation that made it exciting. The horror of him knowing that this was happening to him and the conflict between this and his love for the girl. An audience, I think, will respond to this because they can understand the emotional pull between people. . . . Of course, Oliver Reed was very good as the werewolf. In my opinion he's never done anything better."

Oliver Reed (1938-1999)

Shortly before this issue went to the printer, sad news arrived on Scarlet Street. On May 2, 1999, British actor Oliver Reed, star of *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*, suddenly died at age 61. He suffered a heart attack in a bar in Valetta, the capital of the island of Malta, where he was filming his 54th movie, *THE GLADIATOR*, directed by Ridley Scott. Before Reed collapsed, he and his wife, Josephine, had been drinking with friends and some sailors from the *Cumberland*, a Royal Navy frigate. He died en route to the hospital.

A bit of a wolf in the colloquial sense, Reed had a reputation for binge drinking and a hot temper. In interviews, he described putting his pugilistic skills to the test in numerous barroom brawls. In a restaurant in Hungary, he and his stunt double, Reg Price (*THE PRINCE AND THE PAUPER*/1977), got into an argument about rugby with some local sports fans and narrowly escaped arrest when the dispute turned into a melee. A hotel in Spain threw Reed out in 1973, when he got drunk in the restaurant, stripped off his clothes, and went for a swim in the fish tank. He once sprawled out for a drunken ride on the baggage conveyer at Galway Airport in Ireland.

Born February 13, 1938, this native of Wimbledon, England, dropped out of school at age 17, ran away from home, then worked as a cab driver, as a bouncer in a strip joint, and as a sparring partner for boxers. He also served in the Medical Corps before he decided to become an actor. Small roles, such as a drunk in Hammer's *TWO FACES OF DR. JEKYLL* (1959), led to Anthony Hinds giving Reed his big chance in *THE CURSE OF THE WEREWOLF*.

Reed liked working at Bray Studios and learned his craft well. He credited *CURSE* with making him a star. He also made *THESE ARE THE DAMNED* (1961) and *PARANOIAC* (1962) for Hammer, along with some lesser, non-horror titles.

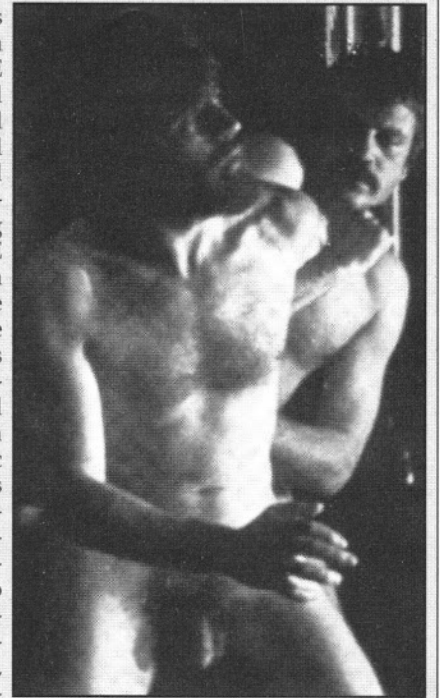
His powerful physical presence and intense personality came through in his film roles, which were for the most part villains, such as Bill Sikes in *OLIVER!* (1968), directed by his uncle, Sir Carol Reed, or imperfect he-

roes, such as Athos in the 1973 version of *THE THREE MUSKETEERS* and its two sequels, all directed by Richard Lester. He starred in several Ken Russell films, including *WOMEN IN LOVE* (1969, pictured), in which his nude wrestling scene with Alan Bates was the first example of male full frontal nudity in a non-pornographic movie. Told of his death, his other co-star in that picture, Glenda Jackson, praised him to *SKY News* as "immaculately professional" at work, despite his controversial off-screen reputation, and added, "I am very sorry he has gone, but I think he probably went the way he would have wished."

In Ken Russell's autobiography, *A British Picture* (William Heinemann, Ltd., 1989), the director, who used Reed again in *THE DEVILS* (1971), *LISZTOMANIA* (1975), and *TOMMY* (1975) said the actor took a simple approach to creating his characters: "moody one, moody two, or moody three . . . depending on the intensity of the mouldering meanness required." Nevertheless, Russell held a high opinion of Reed's acting ability. "For all his macho image, Oliver is a sensitive actor who approaches his craft intuitively."

By all accounts a colorful character in real life as in reel life, Reed will be missed.

—Lelia Loban



SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE VOICES OF TERROR

BBC Radio Writer Bert Coules
interviewed by
Tom Amorosi and Richard Valley

In 1987, writer Bert Coules began a grand adventure that would lead, two years later (at 10:15am on October 9, 1989), to the BBC radio recording of the first Sherlock Holmes mystery starring Clive Merrison as Holmes and Michael Williams as Dr. Watson. Eight years, seven months, seventeen days, and approximately nine hours later, Merrison and Williams spoke the final words of the final episode—and for the first time in history, the entire Canon of Sherlock Holmes stories by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle had been taped with the same two actors in the lead roles.

Here, in an exclusive chat with *Scarlet Street: The Magazine of Mystery and Horror*, Bert Coules tells us how it happened . . .

Scarlet Street: Here, radio drama is all but dead! Why is it still alive in England?

Bert Coules: Oh, it's highly because of the BBC. The radio side of the BBC still has a very strong public service ethic behind it. Drama is seen as a good thing to do. The budget is still there for radio drama, because it's still comparatively cheap to produce compared to TV. The BBC commitment is very strong. The BBC transmits at least one radio play per day and generally more than that.

SS: How did the *Sherlock Holmes* series come about?

BC: It started in 1987, when I suggested that it would be good to do *The Hound of the Baskervilles* again. *The Hound* hadn't been done for something like 10 or 12 years. Sort of cheekily—because I wasn't well known as a writer, then—I sug-

gested *The Hound* and that I write it. And to my amazement, they said, "Yes, please do us a new *Hound of the Baskervilles*." I wrote it as two one-hours, and it was done with Roger Rees as Holmes and a marvelous actor called Crawford Logan as Watson. It was very successful. I thought very highly of it and lots of other people did. Some people didn't care for the casting. There were criticisms, ironic in that the same thing was later said about the new series, that Roger and Crawford sounded too similar. That's a very important thing in radio, as you can imagine. It's not good to confuse the audience; you have to know exactly where you are and who's talking. So when the suggestion was made that we should follow up *THE HOUND* with another of the novels, word came

down from on high that we had to change the casting.

SS: What inspired the BBC to dramatize the entire Canon?

BC: Someone had done some research and discovered that it had never been done on radio with the same cast, not even when Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce did their radio shows. So they came to me and said, "We'd like you to do at least *A Study in Scarlet* as a pilot for a new series with a new cast." Again, I wrote it for two one-hours and we cast about looking at a lot of people, considering an awful lot until we cast Clive Merrison.

SS: Unlike Roger Rees, Merrison's name isn't familiar in the States.

BC: Funny, but Michael Williams was cast as Watson and he's probably a bet-

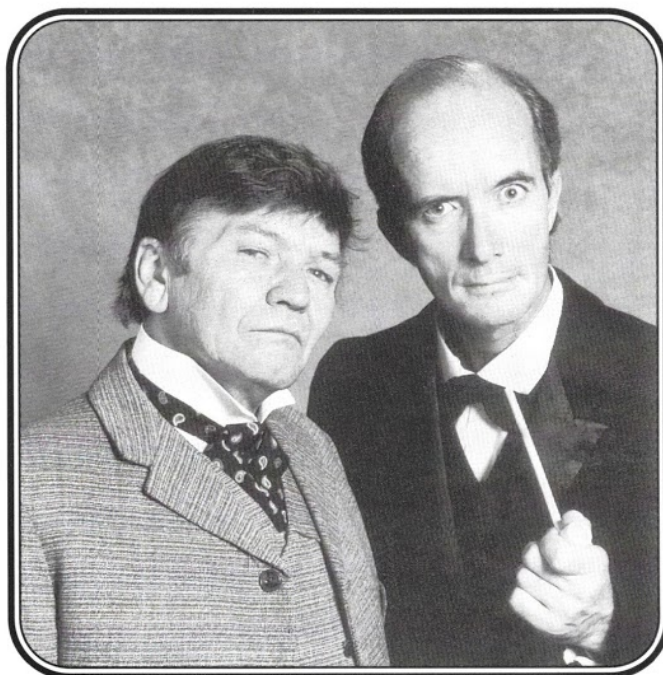
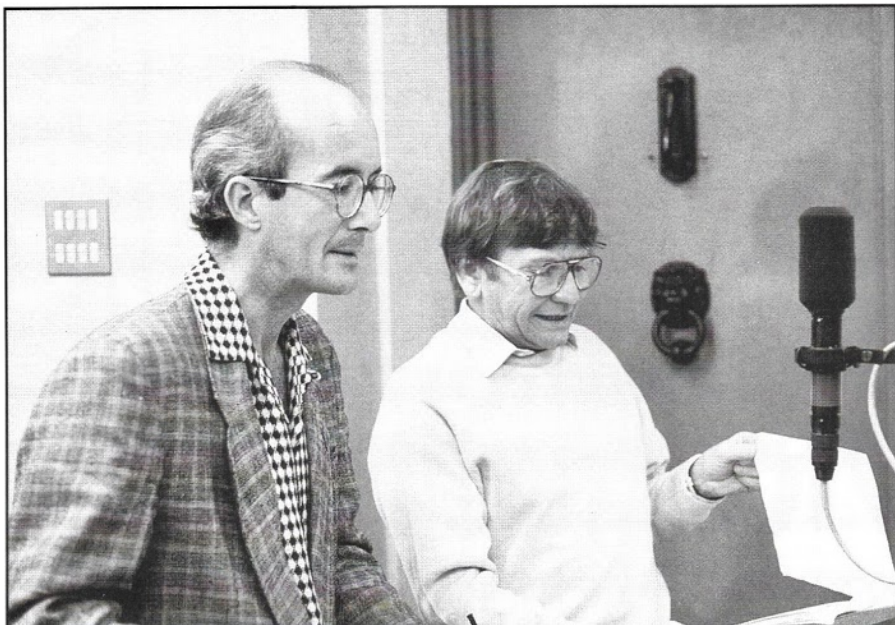


Photo: BBC



Photo: BBC



PAGE 67 TOP: Clive Merrison and Michael Williams, the first actors to perform every Sherlock Holmes story for radio. **PAGE 67 BOTTOM:** Roger Rees and Crawford Logan performed *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES* before being replaced by Merrison and Williams. **LEFT:** Merrison and Williams record the boat chase sequence from *THE SIGN OF THE FOUR*. **RIGHT:** Writer Bert Coules, appropriately photographed on Baker Street.

ter known actor in England than Clive! It's almost certainly the first time that Watson was cast with a better-known name than Holmes. Anyway, we did *A STUDY IN SCARLET* back to back with *THE SIGN OF THE FOUR*, because it seemed silly to get the casts together and not do the whole lot at once. They went out over the air and it was a question of audience reaction and how people in the corporation enjoyed them. Then we got the go-ahead to do the rest.

SS: *The stories were performed in order, weren't they?*

BC: In book publication order, yes, not the order in which they were supposed to take place. We had a few interesting letters about that, because book publication order doesn't exactly match the order in which the stories appeared in *The Strand Magazine*. We've had letters from *Strand* aficionados, saying, "Well, I was expecting this one next or I was expecting that one." But, no, the policy was one book at a time. We started off with the 12 *Adventures* in the order that they appear in the book. And we went right on to the last collection, *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes*.

SS: *For the collection His Last Bow, did you write the title story?*

BC: Yes, I did.

SS: *Chronologically, it's the final story. Holmes has retired to his Sussex bee farm and has a housekeeper named Martha. The question always comes up: is Martha really Mrs. Hudson?*

BC: No! (Laughs) We decided right at the start that there would have been to be policy decisions. One of them was that Martha was not going to be Mrs. Hudson. Largely it was left up to me, and I've never quite seen Mrs. Hudson packing up and leaving London to live this retired life in the country with Mr. Holmes! We've been very lucky that

we've built up a nice rapport between Mrs. Hudson and Holmes and Watson. Still, if it had been Mrs. Hudson in *HIS LAST BOW*, we would have been dealing with Holmes in an unusual setting and Mrs. Hudson in an unusual setting—and that's a lot to ask an audience to latch onto!

SS: *We notice you've given Inspector Lestrade a first name.*

BC: Yes, I have! We know that he's Inspector G. Lestrade from the stories and I didn't want him to be George or Gregory. I don't know where it came from, but I just said to myself, "He's Giles Lestrade." It just seems slightly unusual, but not terribly unlikely.

SS: *Were there any other policy decisions that covered the entire series?*

BC: Well, we got rid of Billy the Page. None of us liked the idea of the character. Billy has more of a thirties feel. This young page boy is much more open to a Poirot than a Sherlock Holmes, I think. Besides, Mrs. Hudson isn't well represented in all of the stories. In many, she doesn't make much more than a token appearance. Giving Billy's material to Mrs. Hudson enabled us to use one of our lead actors and give her a much stronger presence.

SS: *What about Sherlock's smarter brother, Mycroft Holmes?*

BC: Mycroft was mentioned more often than he's mentioned in the stories, but he didn't actually appear. He almost turned up at Mary Watson's funeral, but there wasn't room for him, unfortunately.

SS: *Well, he's a big guy. Mary Watson's funeral, you say?*

BC: Oh, yes, I killed her off. She dies off-stage in the story, but I wrote a death scene. Yes, it began with Mary Watson's death and funeral. Mrs. Hudson came to the funeral, and Mycroft was going to, but there wasn't much space!

SS: *He didn't want to leave the Diogenes Club, perhaps.*

BC: Yes, perhaps! (Laughs) Radio is a medium where it's very easy to confuse the listener. It's very important to keep things—not simple, but they have to be clear cut. Too many voices coming together in a single scene is not always a good idea.

SS: *You eluded before to the controversy over the similarity between the lead actors' voices. There seems to have been a lot of press about it!*

BC: There's been a lot of press about it, far more press comments than comments anywhere else—including comments from listeners. We were aware in the studio that occasionally they'd catch each other's vocal tricks or pick up the same sort of rhythm in a scene. The actual timbre of their voices isn't really alike. But it's also a reflection of the way we tried to write Watson. One of the things that everyone involved in the show was very, very hot on is that Watson had to be an equal partner, he had to be as intelligent as Holmes with different skills and different strengths, otherwise there is no way we could have gone with an actor of Michael Williams' status in England. We could have written Watson as a feed character, but we didn't. Because of that, Watson hasn't been behaving in the shows the way a lot of the audience expects him to behave. And because of that, they've tended to latch onto the voice thing. But it is a recognized problem in radio drama production, particularly in a long-running thing. It's very easy for actors to pick up the same sort of delivery.

SS: *The series is remarkably free of the sort of dialogue that often turns up in old radio shows, where a character will say, "Oh, this is such a lovely restaurant" in order to set the stage.*

BC: It's one of the basic crafts of writing for the medium. That's a development in radio writing in general; I don't claim any particular expertise in that. There's a syndrome in radio drama circles known as the "this gun which I'm holding in my right hand is loaded" syndrome. (Laughs) It's a tendency to tell the audience far more than they need or want to know. If something is important for the audience to know, then it can be conveyed through dialogue subtly. If something is not important for the audience to know, then there is absolutely no need to tell them. I personally rarely used the device of having Watson narrate the stories, because a lot of the narration is simply telling us things about appearances and settings, which are totally unimportant for radio. If Watson narrates something that tells us how he feels about something, that could be useful. The classic example is the opening of *The Sign of the Four*. Holmes is taking cocaine and Watson tells us what he's doing, but he tells us in such a way that we know how he feels about it. That's a long way from Watson saying, "And we rode around the drive and there was a large house with ivy growing up the walls." We don't need to know that!

SS: In some episodes, Holmes and Watson don't even turn up until we're 10 or 15 minutes into the story.

BC: I like to do that. Particularly with one that was in the middle of a series. I certainly wouldn't have done that with the first episode of a series! But one that's in the middle—I mean, people know it's a Sherlock Holmes story. People know that Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John H. Watson are going to turn up sooner or later. It's fun to keep them waiting! It builds a little suspense into the thing; the listener starts to think, "Well, hey, are they going to show up or not?" (Laughs). Also, it's very easy to fall into a fault. A lot of the stories are laid out in the same shape. You have a little opening scene in Baker Street between Holmes and Watson. Holmes does something clever and Watson asks him how and Holmes explains it. Then the client turns up, and the client says, in effect, "Something really strange has happened to me." Then he tells them. Then Holmes says, "Okay, go away. We'll come down and check it out." Then they go down and check it out and solve the case and in the end you have another little scene back in Baker Street. Watson says, "There is still just one point that I don't quite understand." And Holmes explains, usually at great length. Well, that's a fine formula for a short story, but it's a deadly formula for any kind of dramatic presentation.

SS: It's stagnant.

BC: One of the key notes about this whole project was that there was no point in dramatizing something unless you could make it dramatic. It's perfectly possible to take a story directly from the page, give the dialogue to actors and the bits in between to a narrator, who would be Watson. You'd end up

with something that's sort of a dramatized version of the story. But it would be deadly dull; there would be no point in doing it! It would be easier to just have an actor come in and read the story to you! It would also be very short. We worked on a 45-minute slot for the short stories. So, any trick that could make the story more dramatic was good.

SS: There's a good example of that in *THE FINAL PROBLEM*. You spend a lot of time examining Professor Moriarty's organization, introducing the listener to Colonel Sebastian Moran, who doesn't really appear in the Canon until the following story. . . .

BC: You see, Moriarty is the third lead character in that story after Holmes and Watson. There's an argument for saying that, because Holmes and Watson are in

two studio days. The morning of the first day is the time the cast and director come together. It starts in the Meet Room, where we all sit around a table with the script. They all have had the script for some time already, of course, and they have already worked on their parts. We read through the show and it's timed by the production assistant. We discuss problems with dialogue. A radio play doesn't come alive until it's performed. The script is one thing, but the actual performance is another. It's a valuable time to sort out such matters as timing. Then it's broken down into scenes and each is rehearsed a couple of times, and then we do a take.

SS: That's all pretty fast, isn't it?

BC: Yes. The standard technique at the BBC is that very little post-production work is done. All the technical elements are put together at the time the take is done. You have the recorded sound effects, the floor spot effects—it's all done at the same time as the performances. And you have to get all 45 minutes done in two days! That's one reason why a lot of actors aren't happy with radio. It has many freedoms for actors; they can play parts that they couldn't play on the stage or anything visual. They have the script in their hands, which is a wonderful safety net. Even if they don't read the script, it's always there. But the "instantness" of radio is something a lot of actors dislike. It's a very technically demanding medium. It's not a question of just sitting around the table with a microphone. If you're there at the studio, it's wonderful to behold, because they move around a lot working in stereo, they move backwards and forwards from the mike—working very close to the microphone gives you quite a different feel than working a long way away. Close is quiet and intimate, away is bigger and public. We build sets, too. We have doors and desks and drops. It has to be blocked out as carefully as a stage show, really.

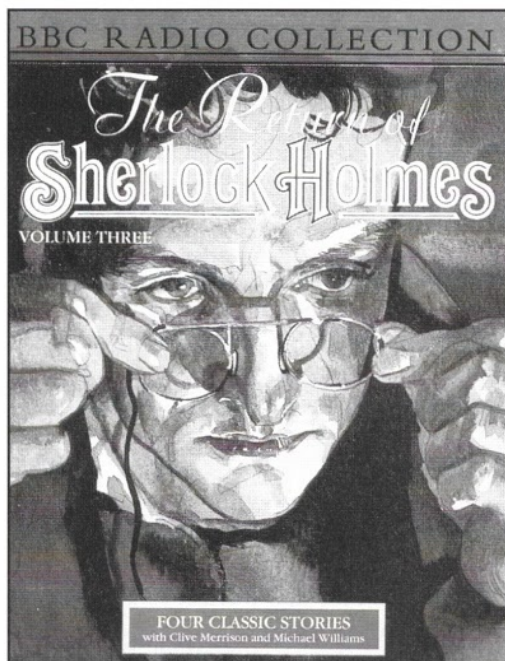
SS: With the same sort of director?

BC: Yes, a producer/director. They set it up and do the casting in collaboration with the writers. One thing I must say is that, unlike other medium, certainly in England today, writers are held in considerable regard in radio. So much is focused on the words. It's a wonderful collaborative medium for writers; I mean, I'm kept in touch with all the way through the process, I have a consultation with the director about rewrites, I do all that. I'm always invited to the studio. I'm always consulted before script changes are made, and I'm usually asked to make the changes myself if they're thought necessary. Post-production, if cuts are necessary, the writer is always asked to do them.

SS: So when the show gets on the air, it's really your show!

BC: Absolutely! I have never had anything inserted into one of my shows at the BBC that I didn't want to be there!

SS: Have you considered moving from radio to writing for the stage?



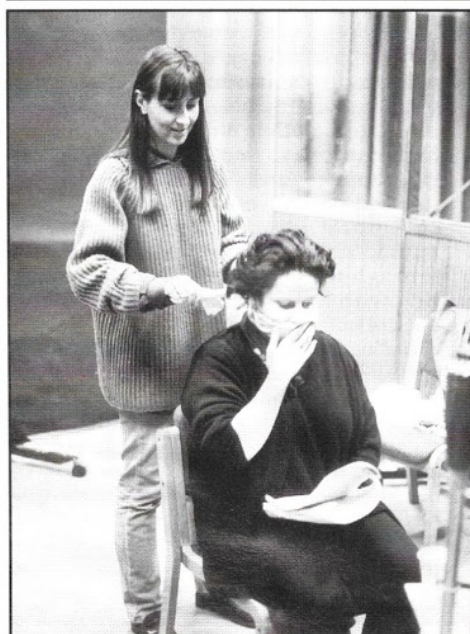
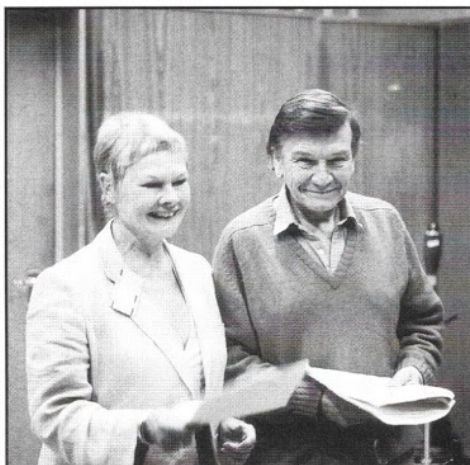
everything, the villain or the victim in each story is actually your central character. Well, *THE FINAL PROBLEM* is centered around Moriarty, and you can't ask the audience to get involved with a character they don't really know. It's necessary to do a lot of building up, particularly in a case like that. Besides, it's interesting. You've got this man who's the Sherlock Holmes of the underworld; he's a genius of a kind that's never been seen before. It's intriguing to get inside the organization and find out how it's all done and a few other secrets.

SS: You brought Moriarty in for *THE VALLEY OF FEAR*, didn't you? He's an offstage presence in the novel.

BC: Yes, I used Moriarty. It's a shame that he's not actually in *The Valley of Fear*. It would be a much better story, a much stronger story, for his participation. We used the professor in *THE EMPTY HOUSE*, as well.

SS: The stories were never broadcast live, were they?

BC: No, they were too complex to be done live. Very little radio drama, now, is done live. I'll give you a typical schedule. For one of the short stories, we have



TOP: Dame Judi Dench guest-starred as Mrs. Hudson (opposite husband Michael Williams as Watson) in the second version of *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*. **MIDDLE:** Clive Merrison prepares to act jumping down from a window. Spot-effects operator Tim Sturgeon readies himself to provide the sound of Sherlock Holmes' feet hitting the gravel. (The game, obviously, is afoot.) **BOTTOM:** Rachel Atkins is gagged by Rebecca Kirby for her role as Beryl Stapleton in *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*.

BC: I'd been asked to write a short Holmes piece for Clive and Michael, but the play by Jeremy Paul for Jeremy Brett and Edward Hardwicke covered pretty much the same ground. It's on very similar lines and I'm very anxious not to tread on his toes. I want to try and find something different to do. I'd like to try to bring in Doyle, do something about Doyle and Holmes and Watson as a triangle, because it's very interesting that Holmes and Watson are far more real to people than Doyle. It would be nice to play along those lines.
SS: In England you've had many instances of radio writers who have gone on to stage work. Joe Orten, for example...

BC: Oh, yes! That's a reflection of the fact that the BBC is the biggest employer of writers in the country, because they put out, at the very least, seven plays a week. And they have a continuing serial as well! That's an awful lot of words and it's an awful lot of writing. A lot of people get their break into dramatic writing by sending in a radio play to the BBC. A lot of people who would be daunted by the idea of writing a film script or TV play or a stage piece think, "Well, maybe a half-hour radio play! I could manage that!" And they do. It's less so, now, because the BBC, like everything else in England, is changing and becoming more commercially minded and more profit oriented. But in the old days, if you sent in a play and it wasn't liked, you wouldn't just get it back, you'd get it back with a very good, detailed letter which said, "We didn't like this, but the reasons we didn't like it are these: you've got too many characters for a radio play, you've got too many scenes, it's very confusing, it's too visual." The writer would get a critique that was useful. And if the play was even half-way liked, they would be invited in to meet a script editor or producer. And exactly the same things would be said, but in more detail. They would be given a decent radio script by an established writer and told, "Take it away, learn from it, send in something else." We'd love to see something else!" There's another English writer called Tom Stoppard...

SS: Oh, yes!

BC: ... who has done lots of stage plays and lots of films. He started on the radio. Orten started on the radio, as you said. Lots of them!

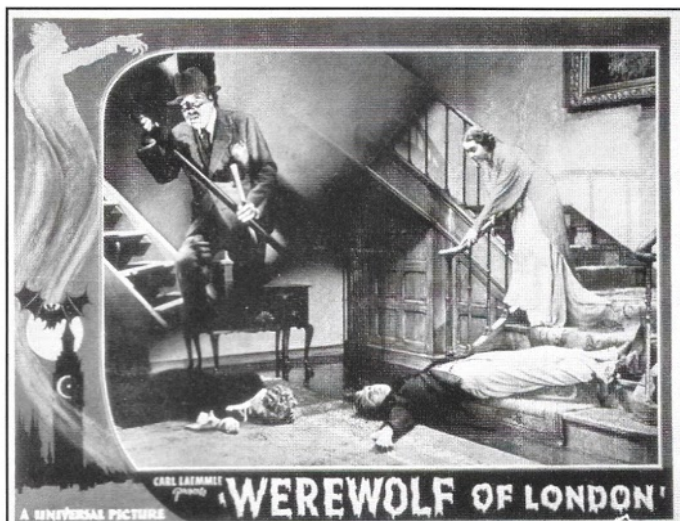
SS: One aspect of your radio scripts that was very rare in the early days of radio drama is crosscutting between scenes. Your scenes are much shorter and, while Holmes might be questioning someone at Baker Street, you'll have Lestrade at the scene of the crime. Then you'll keep cutting between them.

BC: That's the sort of thing I particularly like to write. Different writers approach this in different ways, but I'm very, very fond of doing that. And one of the reasons is that it's simply boring to have a client come to Baker Street, sit down, and say, "Well, Mr. Holmes, you'll never guess what happened to me! This is what happened to me!" (Laughs) I mean, it reads beautifully, but it doesn't play well with actors. And there are time constraints; you've got to have the scene where the client comes, because that's a key moment in getting to know the client. You've got to have the scene where the client leaves, because that's a key moment in setting up the rest of the play! But you don't need the bit in the middle. (Laughs) It's very easy in radio—but very bad—to go from the beginning of a scene to the end. All you have to do is fade out the scene and have a moment of silence and fade in with Holmes saying, "Don't worry, Miss Whatever; we'll look into it." Now that's extremely old-fashioned and extremely boring and not a good way to carry on, really. So you have to find things to go in between the bits that you must have. Really, if I had to sum up the way I dramatized the stories, it's that I had to find the bits to go in between the bits that were necessary. One of the ways of finding the bits to go in between is to go to the story and look for clues. It's a detective thing; there are always clues that you can seize on. In *THE SOLITARY CYCLIST*, there's the girl who's employed to be a governess to the daughter of this mysterious guy. And she plays the piano. And she says, in the short story, "I played the accompaniments for Mr. Carruthers after dinner." Well, I saw that and I immediately thought, "Wonderful! He's a singer and there's a whole panoply of Victorian after-dinner songs that are wonderful pieces of music. They're very evocative!" So what we had in *THE SOLITARY CYCLIST* was Mr. Carruthers singing bits of Victorian songs that comment on the action...

SS: That's very clever.

BC: ... all the way through. Sometimes we'd be in the scene when he's singing, and sometimes it's something you can only do on radio. It's totally unrealistic, but we had a little snatch of song as a scene bridge and then went directly into something else.

Next Issue:
**Fibber McGee
and Watson?**



UNDER A NEW LIGHT

Continued from page 43

Whalean close shots, makes it his own. Whale's sequence is held together by the force of its creator and an inherent visual logic. Less inspired, Walker opts for a series of phone conversations to convey the information with both style and urgency. Not possessing Whale's personal sense of visual unity, Walker takes a more calculated path, alternating cuts within conversations with dissolves to indicate a change to a different conversation. In so doing, he keeps the sequence from becoming chaotic. (Actual chaos in so thoughtful a film would have been disastrous.)

With the police unable to find him, Glendon arrives at Glendon Manor (somewhat improbably through a trap door in his greenhouse) for one last bid for salvation through the Marifasa. It has not yet bloomed, but Hawkins tells him he thinks it will soon do so. What is most amazing about these closing sections is the very strong consistency of characterization. Walker retains the film's symbolic value without sacrificing any aspect of its very real excitement as a thriller. Right away, we still have the relationship with Hawkins, who doesn't even question the fact that the police are looking for Glendon, and about whom there is never a question that he will say nothing of his master's return.

The Marifasa does bloom, but again with remarkable and ironic consistency, Glendon does not immediately cut and utilize the flower. Instead, his scientific good sense causes him to stop and wash his hands first, a perfectly believable and correct character trait that seals his doom. His actions give Yogami, who has sneaked into the room, time to use the flower himself. Equally ironic is the fact that, having used the antidote, Yogami prevents himself from turning into a werewolf while at the same time leaving himself easy prey for Glendon. In the ensuing struggle, Yogami's "salvation" brings about his own end.

One cannot but admire Walker's sure-footedness in staging a thoroughly exciting fight in which he integrates the film's symbolism and audaciously cuts away to a moment laced with the comedy of Lisa and Aunt Ettie. (Ettie, after hearing the sound of crashing glass in the laboratory, deems it necessary to check under the bed before telling her niece to relax!) At the exact moment that Glendon gets the upper hand in the struggle, Walker cuts to a shot through a cagelike grating, suggesting the entrapment of both characters. Even better, he stages the fight so that it climaxes with Yogami being strangled at the base of the all-important Marifasa, its antidotal value now of no use to either man. Pulling out the stops for sheer thrills, he shoots Glendon looming into the camera in close shot as Yogami dies, only cutting away at the moment of Glendon's triumphal howl.

The howl brings Lisa and Ettie to the window, where they see Glendon heading for the house. Aunt Ettie's subsequent call to Colonel Forsythe for help produces the information that he is already en route, adding another excitement (albeit a very basic crosscutting one) to the fast-moving events. Even here, Walker keeps the thrills on even footing with the more symbolic aspects of his film. When Glendon climbs over the balcony railing, he is once more framed by its bars. Pursuing Lisa and Ettie into the house, he is surrounded by the bars of the staircase and their looming shadows on the wall behind him.

At this point, Paul arrives in timely fashion. The previous fight between Paul and Glendon on the lawn allows for a cross reference—there, Glendon was distracted from killing Lisa by the appearance of Paul. Here, it is Lisa's face at the window that saves Paul's life (he has been knocked unconscious) by causing the werewolf to take up its attempt to "kill the thing it loves best."

Once back in the house (with Aunt Ettie conveniently fainted), Glendon backs Lisa up the stairs in a series of incredibly mobile close shots alternating with a master shot. Lisa's attempts to break through to Glendon's human side ("It's Lisa, don't you know me? Lisa") have no effect on Glendon. As she shouts his name, Colonel Forsythe comes through the door and shoots him. In another stunningly mobile shot, the camera follows his fall down the stairs, culminating in an upside down close shot. With dramatic inevitability, the clock chimes as Glendon makes his final speech. "Thanks. Thanks for the bullet. It was the only way. In a few moments, now, I shall know why all this had to be. Lisa—good-bye, Lisa. I'm sorry I couldn't have made you happier." In and of itself the speech is surprisingly moving, and it is interesting to note that the matter-of-fact Glendon has sufficiently broadened his outlook to anticipate the possibility of an after-death answer to his fate.

The death of Glendon and its immediate aftermath is perhaps the most graceful and dignified in any horror film. There is genuine respect in the way Colonel Forsythe removes his hat, and the triumphal rise in Karl Hajos' score as Glendon returns to human form aptly captures the suggestion of his spirit released. Further, the very proper decision of Forsythe, "In my report, I shall say that I shot him by accident while he was trying to protect his wife," carries an emotional punch in light of the proceedings (as well as reestablishing the status quo), and is far more believable than the supposed actual belief that Larry Talbot in *THE WOLF MAN* was not the creature in question, but the victim of an accidental attack.

The final dissolve to the moon and the sky, and ultimately to the airplane that (one assumes) is carrying Lisa away with Paul to her freedom now seem a bit overstated (and there is unintended humor in moving from the airplane shot to the Universal logo!), but they carry the point and the conviction is not in question.

For one reason or another, *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* has never been admitted to the ranks of the truly great Universal horror films, and yet an examination shows that it is surely better than such popular offerings as *THE RAVEN* (1936) and *THE INVISIBLE RAY*. Of course, the lack of a great horror star figures in this, but one suspects that much of the problem stems from the fact that the complexity of Colton's screenplay and Walker's direction have never been given the attention necessary to appreciate them in depth. Further, the film doesn't possess the cinematic fireworks of Whale or Edgar G. Ulmer. This almost certainly has worked against it by critics so fond of damning a film for what it fails to do, rather than appreciating it for what it accomplishes.

WEREWOLF OF LONDON does have weaknesses. It is the first of the Universal horror films not to bear the signature of Carl Laemmle, Jr. as producer, indicative of it being taken somewhat less seriously by the studio. It is also the first that looks and (perhaps more importantly) sounds

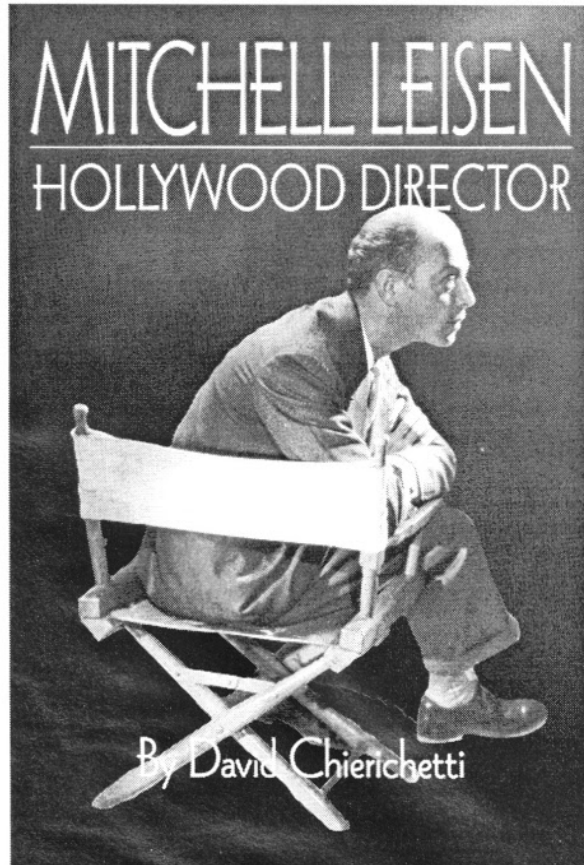
like it is part of a series. Despite some 15 minutes of original scoring by Karl Hajos, there is also 13 minutes of music culled mostly from Heinz Roemheld's brilliant orchestrations and arrangements of classical music for *THE BLACK CAT*. Hajos' music is quite good, and musical director Gilbert Kurland does a remarkable job of filling in with the Roemheld music. That music can never be completely divorced from *THE BLACK CAT*, but it is still used to good effect in *WEREWOLF*. Walker's film never dispels the echoes of the earlier (and greater) work, but one need only compare the intelligent application of the music here with the slapdash use of it in *THE RAVEN* (or, worse, 1936's *FLASH GORDON*) to appreciate *WEREWOLF*'s achievement in making something out of the materials at hand.

WEREWOLF OF LONDON is the unsung masterpiece of a sadly neglected filmmaker. Viewing it as much as an allegory on jealousy and the beast that lies under the surface of even the most civilized of human beings, Walker journeyed into the realm of the psychological film, much as Whale and Ulmer had done and would continue to do, but with a style and message wholly his own. That he did so without compromising the film's value as a thriller deserves more than our casual recognition and respect. It deserves our taking a second look at Walker's other works and rethinking them and their maker accordingly.

Ken Hanke is the author of *Tim Burton: An Unauthorized Biography of the Filmmaker* (Renaissance Books, 1999).



Much criticism of *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (1935) stems from the fact that it has no horror icon such as Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi in its cast. Many fans envision a film in which Karloff would have played Dr. Wilfrid Glendon and Lugosi Dr. Yogami, but such dreams are unfair to Henry Hull and Warner Oland, both of whom contribute vivid characterizations.



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ROVIN

Continued from page 64

JR: No, because I stuck to the elements that were horrific and downplayed the comedy by keeping the comedians off-stage—which is by no means meant to be a pejorative against Abbott and Costello, because it's a great movie, still.

SS: And for the most part the monsters are played fairly straight.

JR: Actually, if you remove Abbott and Costello, everything is played straight.

SS: With the possible exception of Bela Lugosi throwing a flower pot at the Wolf Man!

JR: Well, maybe he hoped it was a mari-phaa plant!

SS: We're curious about your use of a hero in the book—or rather the lack of one. You have several characters, all of whom seem useful as hero material, yet they all meet gruesome ends.

JR: Right—because in ABBOTT AND COSTELLO MEET FRANKENSTEIN, Joan Raymond was clearly the smartest and most heroic, even though they had her do the "girl thing" at the end by getting hypnotized and having to be rescued. I wanted to continue the idea that the female was the strongest character, and also it created the tension that Larry Talbot is supposed to kill the one he loves and so he was getting closer to her—would he kill her, would he not? So it never occurred to me to have a competent male as the hero. It would have been the antithesis of the Universal storyline.

SS: Even when they have a hero, he's not usually very competent.

JR: No, he's totally, totally inept! And Talbot is the hero, anyway, and you're stuck with that. Talbot is and, in WERE-WOLF OF LONDON, it's Glendon. Just because they're tragic heroes doesn't make them any less heroic.

SS: Did you have to do research to come up with that amazing set of names in the book?

JR: Oh, God! I had to go through the cast lists to refresh myself on all that stuff! Things like the Morgan Islands and even the stuff from WHITE ZOMBIE—I tried to make it so that every key character or element had some corollary in the Universal or period-monster universe.

SS: You wove a kind of myth out of the films, so that it had coherence—as if these were our own modern legends, finally written down.

JR: Yes, even to the point of trying to figure out when in the mythos the Creature from the Black Lagoon saga could have fit into Florida and how it might have taken attention away from La Mirada—or the Mummy stuff, or even the Invisible Man project having driven Talbot from London. All those things happen at the same time in the Universal canon.

SS: You were going to do a sequel. What happened?

JR: What happened was a scheduling problem. I'm doing four other novels for Berkeley and there was just no way we could make it all work on the schedule they were insisting on. Initially, there

was going to be a longer period between the Universal novels, but then this one started to sell and the thinking was, "Let's rush the next one out." I said, "Well, there's no way we can do that," and so they hired somebody else. My understanding is that they've scrapped the overview—the master plan, so to speak—which was to tie together the rest of the Universal Monsters, from Klaris to the Mole People to the Bride of Frankenstein. I have really no idea what they're doing now.

SS: Klaris instead of Kharis, so as not to conflict with the new MUMMY, which makes little sense since it's Im-Ho-Tep, not Kharis, in the film . . .

JR: I understand they thought they needed to protect it, but it's not as though there would have been a conflict. We'd come up with this nifty idea of Kharis having one of his eyes closed because it was the eye of Ra and was used to slow people down, which would explain how he always caught them!

SS: At last! An explanation! The Mummy always had to back his victims into an alley.

JR: Or a corner!

SS: Perhaps those aren't the most shining moments in Universal horror history.

JR: Ananka crawling out of the mud sure is, though! Boy, that was something! Scenes like that make it all worthwhile, because we're so hungry for those images. If we get one of them, we're just so happy . . .



LEFT: Stalwart companions Hugh Renwick and Dr. Wilfrid Glendon (Clark Williams and Henry Hull) have run off to pick a few flowers in the mountains of Tibet, leaving Glendon's neglected wife back in London. Throughout *WEREWOLF OF LONDON* (1935), Glendon is depicted as being decidedly uncomfortable around people—the only exceptions being his faithful botanical assistant Hawkins (J. M. Kerrigan) and Renwick, with whom he seemingly has nothing in common. RIGHT: Sir Thomas Forsythe (Lawrence Grant) appears to have Hugh—forever putting his hand on the arms of other men—pegged. Dr. Yogami (Warner Oland) is the surprised recipient of Hugh's latest social impropriety.

WITH PLENTY OF MONEY

Continued from page 41

old biddies needing an extra man at the table. Less obviously fey than his compatriots, he is nonetheless cut from the same cloth as Oscar Wilde's Algernon Moncrieff (in the 189X play *THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST*), Saki's Clovis (in 19XX's *The Chronicles of Clovis*), and the characters played by Rex O'Malley in such films as *CAMILLE* (1937) and *MIDNIGHT* (1939). He is essential to polite society, but he's quite out of place in Tibet—that is, unless Glendon brought him along for the ride in order to, well, bring him along for the ride. Otherwise, the good doctor might just as well have invited his poor, suffering wife, whom he's neglected terribly (another sign!) and who could really use a good outing (though not the same sort as Willie and Hugh).

Is there any internal evidence within the body of the film to justify a revisionist reading of the Glendon/Renwick relationship? As they say in academia: you bet your booties! For one thing, there is Hugh Renwick's very name, his Christian appellation attesting to the dual identity he shares with Glendon (imagine the botanist's sexual disorientation on meeting an attractive man proclaiming, "I'm Hugh!"), while his surname at once calls to mind that most renowned of horror-dom's camp followers: R. M. Renfield!

Then there is the very superfluity of Hugh Renwick: he serves no real function in the story, at least on its surface. He doesn't even do card tricks, which might lighten up Aunt Ettie's little revels. His expository dialogue with Glendon in Tibet could easily have been given to the priest. He never makes it to the moonlit valley in which Glendon discovers the fateful flower. And once back in London, he merely hovers around the edges of the action, like a discarded plaything. (More on this presently.) Before very long, he disappears from the story altogether, well before the final fadeout.

Socially, Hugh is almost invariably found in the company of men (such as Sir Thomas) or middle-aged women (such as Aunt Ettie and Lady Alice Forsythe, the latter played by the formidable Charlotte Granville). He steers both Aunt Ettie and Lady Alice through Glendon's collection of exotic, mouse-munching flora. On the single occasion when we catch him in the company of a woman his

own age, seated on a sofa at Aunt Ettie's soiree, both look bored to distraction. (If only I knew some card tricks, he seems to be thinking.) Later, when Aunt Ettie is menaced by Glendon in werewolf form and her terrified screams bring some guests to her rescue, Sir Thomas stops on the stairs to tell Hugh to keep the women downstairs—leaving poor Hugh downstairs, too, of course, where Sir Thomas clearly thinks he belongs.

Then there's all that touchy-feely business. Throughout *WEREWOLF*, Wilfrid Glendon rarely touches his wife, and never does so absentmindedly and naturally, as loving, affectionate couples so often do without realizing it. No, when the botanist puts his hand on Lisa, it is always a matter of great show and an inevitable opportunity to make a little speech. Not so with Hugh! Comfy and cozy in mountainous Tibet, Glendon repeatedly touches his companion, on the arms, on the chest, on the footpath, on the rocks . . .

Why doesn't Hugh Renwick play a more active part in Wilfrid Glendon's life after their Tibetan jaunt? Why is he tossed aside? On a symbolic level, the answer is plainly self-evident. The Mariphasa lupino lumino represents forbidden knowledge, the knowledge desperately sought by Glendon, the knowledge he hopes to share with Hugh, not with Lisa. It is the next step (perhaps the first genuinely physical step?) in the men's relationship. They are warned by the priest to turn back, but forge ahead anyway. Hugh, however, is unable to complete the journey to enlightenment. He falters on the trail, psychologically impeded. Trudging behind Glendon, he swears that he is unable to move his legs, as if an invisible someone had hold of them. Glendon hesitates, too, clutching his chest and claiming to have been struck. (Mere minutes before, the botanist had touched his companion in the same spot; the parallelism of the two gestures is inescapable.)

Ultimately, Hugh cannot take those final steps that would free his desires and bind his fate forever to the older, braver man; he stops on the path, saying not a word to the comrade who forges ahead. Glendon enters the forbidden valley alone, where he finds knowledge in the form of a flower and, tragically, the shadowy figure destined to take Hugh Renwick's place as the most important man in his life . . .

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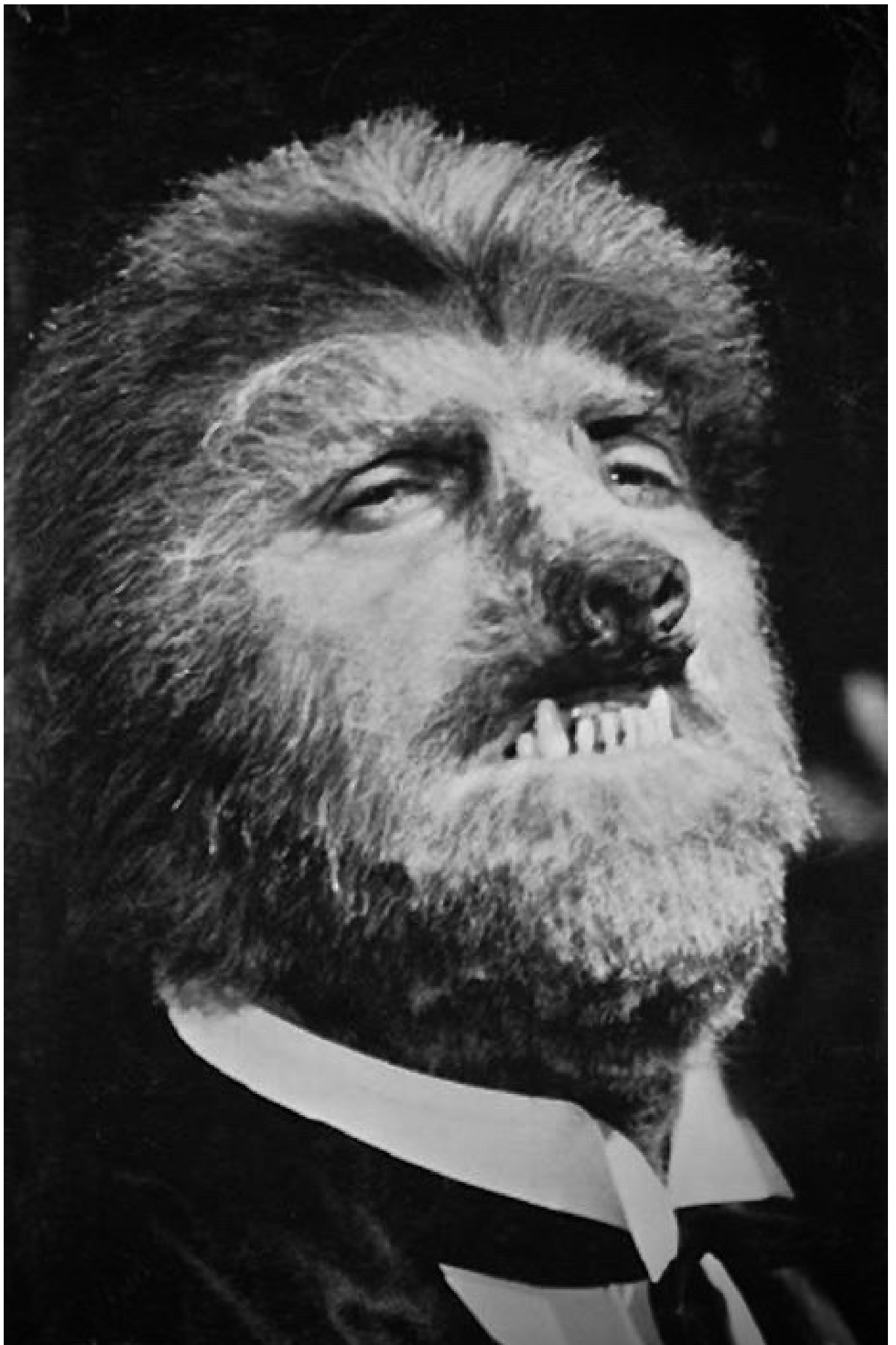
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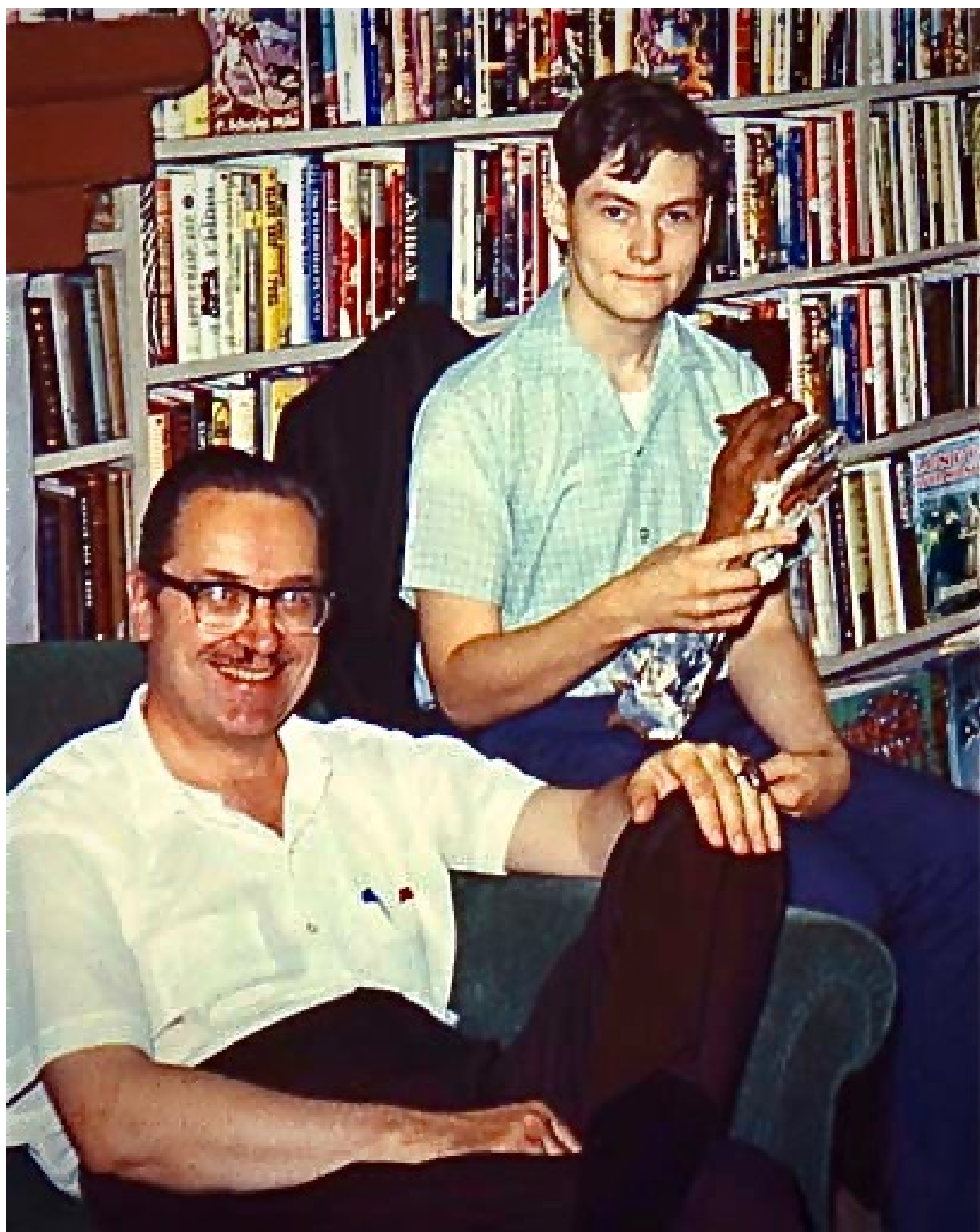












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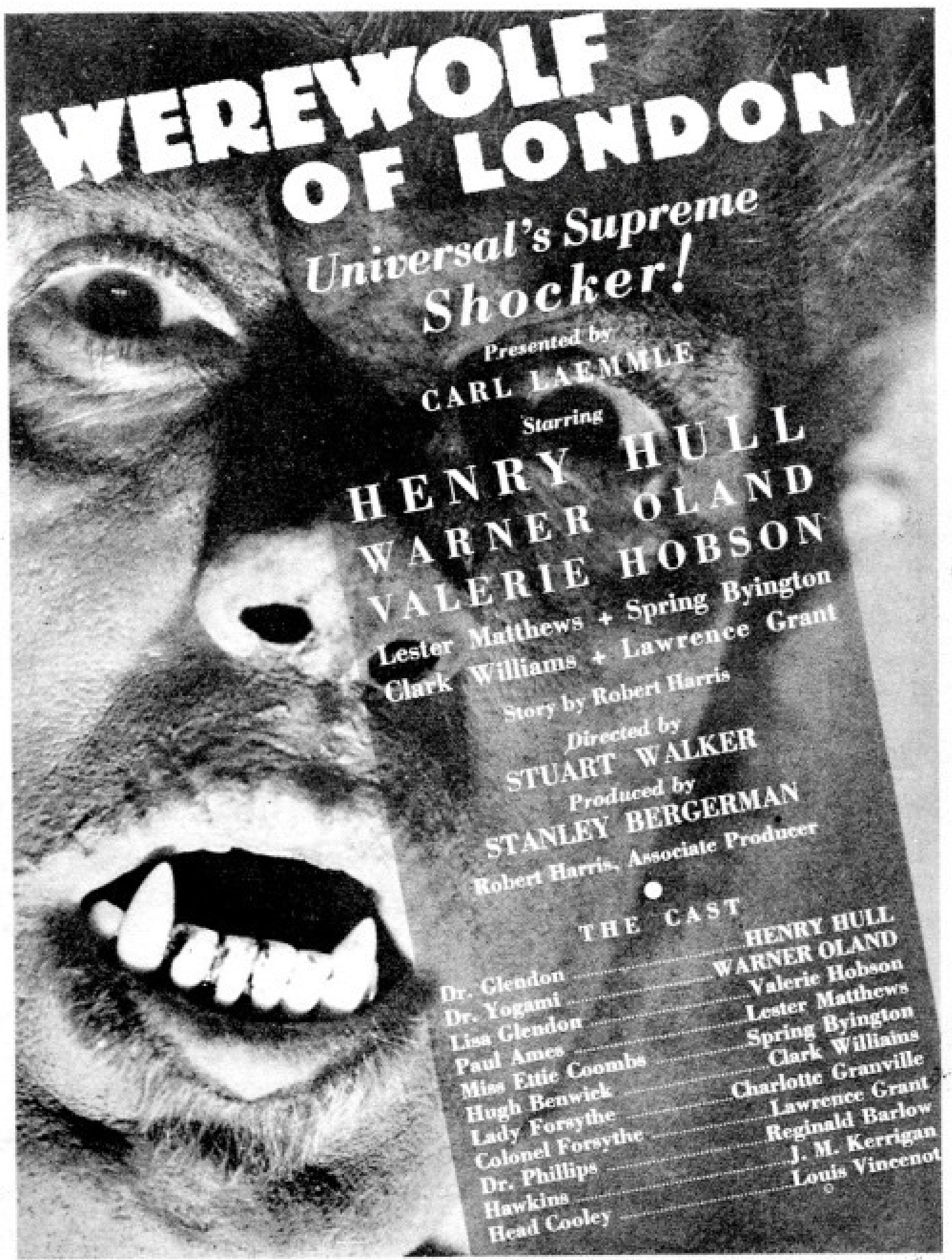
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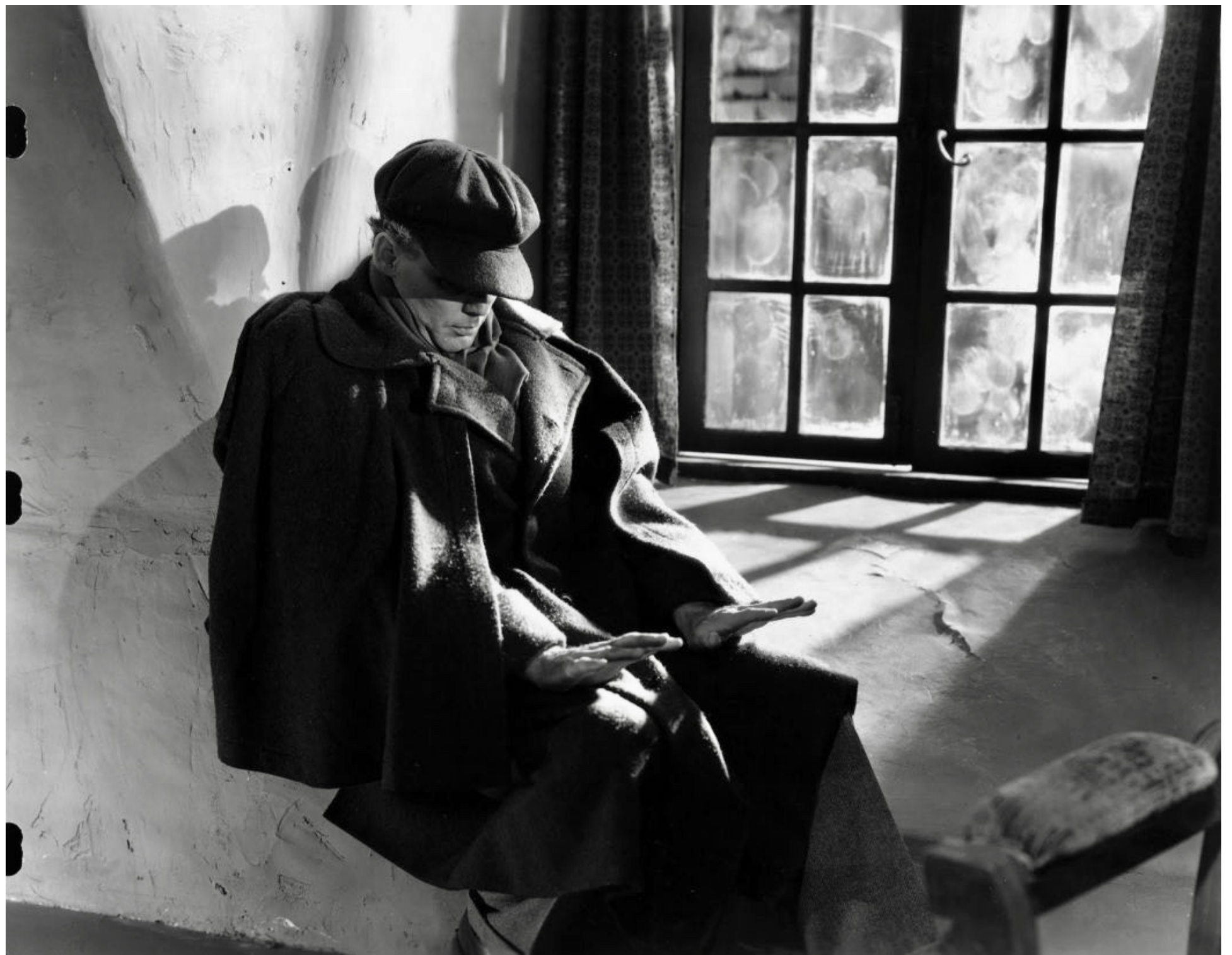
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